

MARIOLOGY

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VOLUME ONE

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Translator's Preface

ONE of the outstanding characteristics of the Catholic Church as contrasted with most of the other Christian groups is undoubtedly her devotion to Mary. The Church in her guidance and doctrine could leave unquestioned the fact that the faithful themselves, particularly the great mass of ordinary Catholics, have a number of special practices of their own to venerate the Blessed Mother. Here we are not faced with a more or less unreasoned expression or outgrowth of popular belief. It is an important fact that in the official liturgy the Blessed Virgin Mary occupies a place of honor, and that in the Catholic Church no other single article of faith has been so much developed and enriched in the course of centuries as the doctrine about Mary. Although the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception is, relatively speaking, still of recent date, among the theologians there are some who are already zealously occupied in endeavoring to obtain the dogmatic definition of the Blessed Virgin's bodily assumption into heaven and of her universal mediatorship of grace.

Among Protestants it has become a proverb that the Catholic Church is no longer a Church of Christ, but a Church of Mary. This is not the place to show the falsity of their judgment. It is sufficient to point out how the concept of Christ, which has faded more and more in the

Protestant Churches through denial of His divinity, has been retained in all its purity in the Catholic Church, and how this concept of Christ, precisely through its divine excellence, keeps vivid the veneration of His mother as truly Mother of God. Far from diverting attention from Christ, the veneration of Mary has proved the most striking guaranty of the purity of belief in the incarnate Word.

This close relationship between faith in Christ and the veneration of Mary is felt instinctively, as it were, by every Catholic. The modern believer who wishes to account for this feeling will undoubtedly find numerous indications of it in most religious handbooks. No other theologian, in our opinion, made such sound researches into the dogmatic foundation of the Catholic devotion to Mary or elucidated it so profoundly, as Scheeben. With the deep and synthetic view that marked him as one of the greatest religious thinkers of the last century, he incorporated the Catholic doctrine regarding Mary into the whole of Catholic dogmatic theology. In doing so he showed in an unexcelled way how the veneration of Mary takes root in the deepest soil of Christian belief. His Mariology not only is the best explanation known to us, of the doctrine about Mary, but it also gives a deeper insight into the most important truths that ennoble and comfort Christian life.

A brief glance at the life and endeavors of this master will facilitate a fuller understanding of the originality and enduring value of his work.

THE THEOLOGICAL WORK OF SCHEEBEN

Matthias Joseph Scheeben was born March 1, 1835, at Meckenheim near Bonn. He finished the study of the humanities at the age of seventeen and presented himself for

the priesthood in the diocese of Cologne. Since he had already given evidence of possessing more than ordinary talents at the grammar school, he was sent to Rome for his seminary studies. For seven years he lived there among the students of the Collegium Germanicum, garbed in the vivid red cassock peculiar to this college, which even yet attracts attention in Rome. He followed the lectures in philosophy and theology at the papal Gregorian University, which, like the Germanicum, was under the direction of the Jesuits. At that time Father A. Delacroix, a Fleming, was rector of the Germanicum.

In this excellent educational center Scheeben could follow the lessons and profit by the influence of such men as Liberatore, Secchi, Perrone, Cerciali, Passaglia, Franzelin, Ballerini, Patrizi, Kleutgen and Schrader. Passaglia worked with Schrader at a new publication of Petavius' *Dogmata theologica* and tried to make the positive method find acceptance again in theology, while Kleutgen, whose first two parts of the *Theologie der Vorzeit* appeared in 1854, ushered in a fruitful return to St. Thomas and old Scholasticism. A fellow student of Scheeben, Father Tilmann Pesch, could tell later how the gifted Rhinelander applied himself with exceptional zeal to the study of St. Thomas. During his whole life Scheeben kept a grateful memory of the Germanicum and his professors at Rome and continued to hold them in sincere affection.

On December 18, 1858, Scheeben was ordained priest by Cardinal Patrizi, and in the summer of the following year he returned as doctor of theology to his fatherland. After a year as rector and teacher of religion at the boarding-school of the Salvatorian Sisters at Muensterreifel, he was appointed by Cardinal Archbishop John von

Seissel as professor in dogmatics at the seminary of Cologne. There he remained until his too early death, July 21, 1888.

During the twenty-eight years of his professorship Scheeben displayed an amazing energy. In his very first year he published a booklet, in which he translated into fluent German the most beautiful texts of the Fathers of the Church and the finest writings of poets in regard to Mary. He also wrote an article in the periodical *Der Katholik* on "The doctrine of the supernatural and its significance toward science and life." In it appear these noteworthy words, which indicate the leading motive of his whole dogmatic work of later years: "The doctrine of the supernatural, taken in all its depth and extent, penetrates Christianity in all directions; it alone gives to Christianity its really divine, specific, and mysterious character; it forms the center of the glorious system of its mysteries."

The following year, the twenty-six-year-old theologian published his first masterpiece: *Natur und Gnade*. Professor Grabmann, who brought out a new edition in 1922, testifies about it as follows: "The young professor accomplished here a work which, in view of the contemporary condition of theology, we must call an exceptional scientific achievement, and it remains of the greatest importance to our own time, for the solid structure of thought and its beneficial influence on will and life."

In this book there appears clearly the great underlying idea of the supernatural, which rules the author's whole thought and life, and the typical characteristics of his theology. It shows a close continuity of thought with the whole preceding theological tradition, with which he be-

came thoroughly acquainted, having special preference for the speculative nature of the Greek Fathers. A second feature is his exceptional speculative ability and masterly skill in penetrating the religious doctrines in their deepest connections, ramifications, and conclusions, and in elucidating the inner order and sublime beauty of dogma. He thoroughly understands the art of developing in every respect the philosophical ideas and doctrines of service to theological speculation; and here the philosophy of St. Thomas serves him as a standard. A third feature is his keen sense of asceticism and mysticism giving the *theologia affectiva* its proper sense and high value of life.

That the book sounded a new note in the theological world of that time, is evident from the lengthy criticism, laudatory in every respect, by Professor Aloysius Schmid in the *Theologische Quartalschrift* of Tuebingen, to which the editor subjoined the following remark: "The review lying before us will make the readers acquainted with a theological trend that is to the liking of many at the present time because of the combining of the mystical with the speculative element. One keeps this view of its timeliness in mind as an explanation for the acceptance of it in this periodical."

That very year Scheeben published another book which gave an enlightening view of the serious preparatory work that he spent on his *Natur und Gnade*. It is a republication, provided with numerous personal remarks, of a Latin booklet by an Italian Jesuit of the eighteenth century, Antonius Casini, entitled *Quid est homo*.¹ In it the doctrine about the possibility of a purely natural state and the

¹ *Quid est homo, sive controversia de statu purae naturae, qua ratio simul et finis oeconomiae Dei erga homines supernaturalis uberrime demonstratur ex Patrum praesertim sententia*, Moguntiae (Mainz), 1862.

essence of the supernatural are set forth according to the teaching of the Fathers. Scheeben warns us that he looked up in the original works the texts which had been often incompletely cited by Casini, that he left out the inconclusive quotations and substituted others for them, indicating this substitution by an asterisk. When we consider that it contains several hundred texts of the Fathers, we get an idea of the gigantic work behind it. We also understand how Scheeben acquired his amazing knowledge of the Fathers of the Church.

Scheeben wished not only to win back the professional theologians to the study of the supernatural life, which was pushed so much into the background through the rationalist influence of the period of Enlightenment; he also dreamed of acquainting the Christian people with the treasures of the life of grace on a larger scale. He possessed, however, no ability for the task of popularizing his writings. Therefore he conceived the idea of adapting into German the splendid booklet of a Spanish Jesuit with a German name, Joannes Eusebius Nieremberg (d. 1658). This adaptation proved to be such a free translation that we may almost speak of it as an independent work. It appeared in the following year under the title: *Die Herrlichkeiten der gottlichen Gnade*, and became our author's most popular book. It went through ten editions, four before Scheeben's death, the last in the year 1925. It was also translated into various languages.

This book is the first work of Scheeben which was published by Herder at Freiburg. He had met the gifted publisher in September, 1861, at Ostend. Benjamin Herder, then forty-three years old, became a true friend of Scheeben, and their correspondence throws much light upon

the origin of Scheeben's books and upon the method of his work.

At first Scheeben intended to edit still other writings of Nieremberg for the German public. In the meantime, however, he had started a work in which his brilliant gifts could be better utilized: a synthetic exposition of the most important mysteries of Christianity. The first fruits of it appeared under the form of a series of nine articles in *Der Katholik*, 1861 and 1862. About the middle of October, 1864, he finished the great work, 772 pages. It was published in 1865. Grabmann, who calls it "eine grosstat der theologischen Spekulation," says: "It brings before the mind's eye in an amazing fashion the fullness of Christian truth, visualized as a unity, centered in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. It is no mere copy of the great medieval syntheses, it is not an attempt to reproduce any past, it is a masterpiece pointing to the future."

Alas, minds were not yet prepared for such a high flight. The work was given a cool reception. It throws a sad light upon the condition of theology in the Germany of those days. For example, we read the following criticism, by Wenzeslaus Mattes, who had written the article "Mysterien" in Wetzer and Welte's *Kirchenlexicon* (1st ed.). To him Scheeben's book is not one about mysteries, but a mystery itself. "Through the whole work," he says, "there reigns such an indistinctness, confusion, and unintelligibility that it is almost impossible to read it through to the end. So the author will have worked practically in vain; some will read passages in the book, no one, except possibly the critics, will read it through. Even this may be doubtful." At first, therefore, the book did not sell well: Scheeben did not live to see a reprint.

It speaks well for the broad mind of Herder, truly an exceptional man, that he did not thereby lose faith in Scheeben but urged him on immediately to new publications. From a letter of November 25, 1866, we learn that Scheeben intended to turn out a book on moral theology in Latin, "which would complete Gury by its thoroughness and scientific character." This thought seems to have occurred to him, because at the end of 1866 the editorship of the *Kölner Pastoralblatt* came to him, or rather, as he expressed it himself, "he was sentenced to it by the wishes of higher authority." But in May, 1867, he made known to Herder that this plan seemed to him unworkable on account of his professorship in dogmatic theology.

In the meantime a new plan had matured in him, which was at once endorsed enthusiastically by Herder: a complete Handbook of Dogmatic Theology. The letter in which he expressed himself about it to his friend Herder, is of great importance, as he sketches in it the relation of his book to the theological works then current in Germany. It is to be concise and at the same time as rich as possible in positive and speculative theology; strictly scientific and based on the classical masters. The ideal had been aimed at before but not attained.

Encouraged by Herder's decision to introduce the new dogmatics into his *Theologische Bibliothek*, Scheeben started to work. He worked on it with entire devotion for twenty long years, the last of his life, but left this standard work unfinished as St. Thomas did his *Summa theologiae*. It reached three thick volumes of a thousand pages each. After Scheeben's death Atzberger added a fourth volume to it, to complete the exposition of the dogma in accord

with the doctrines of the Church, the sacraments, and the eschatology.

At first neither Scheeben nor Herder had thought that the book would attain such proportions and would require so many years of work. In their correspondence we see how, time and again, the publisher urged limitation and speed, but how, in spite of this, the brilliant theologian, driven, as it were, by his intellectual power, still continued to extend his researches, in every subdivision subjecting each question anew to a thorough preparatory study, and as progress became slower the work grew in length. The battle about the Vatican Council and the infallibility of the pope, into which he threw himself with heart and soul, required all his energies. It began with a pamphlet against Döllinger, followed by several others. After that he took over the editorship of the periodical *Das ökumenische Konzil von 1869*, ushering in its second year of publication, 1870, with a foreword signed by himself and with "far upward of 5,000 subscriptions." After the Council he continued this publication until 1882 under the title *Periodische Blätter*. Most of the anonymous articles are from his pen.

At the end of 1872, to Herder, who is impatiently awaiting to print the first volumes of the *Dogmatic Theology*, he writes that, "precisely through the working out of these articles a new concept of the entire doctrine about the teaching authority of the Church has come to my mind. I therefore had to rewrite this entire chapter a third, and in part a fourth, time." The preface of the first volume is dated June 21, 1874, the feast day of St. Aloysius, patron of the Germanicum. In this date, the sixth centenary of

the deaths of the two princes of medieval theology, the holy doctors Thomas and Bonaventure, he sees a favorable sign: those two masters also worked victoriously at the temple of sacred science during an extremely stormy period.

This first volume contains as the first book (pages 8–419) a remarkable introduction to theology, under the significant title, *Theologische Erkenntnislehre*. In it the objective principles of this knowledge are studied first, namely, the divine revelation, laid down in Sacred Scripture and tradition, and the teaching authority of the Church. After that the theological knowledge by itself as *intellectus fidei*, in the function of faith, is analyzed. An outline of the history of theology is added to this (pages 419–62). Professor Grabmann, who incorporated these pages of Scheeben into his *History of Theology*, does not hesitate to say that this historical summary, “with its rich content and strongly marked characteristics of personalities and schools of thought, gives evidence of an amazing command of the entire preceding theology.” The doctrine about God in His unity and trinity is included in these introductory dissertations (pages 463–906).

More than three years passed before Scheeben was ready with the sequel. As yet he could deliver only one part of the second volume; the preface is dated December 8, 1877. The second part was again three years in coming, May 2, 1880. Here we find as the third book the doctrine “regarding God in His fundamental and original relationship to the world, or the doctrine of the foundation of the natural and supernatural order” (pages 1–514). The fourth book deals with “sin and the kingdom of sin as a contradiction of the supernatural order and as combating

it" (pages 515–684). After a thorough study of sin in general, it treats of the sin of the angels and original sin. Book five, which could be included only in part in the second volume (pages 685–941), deals with the redemption of fallen mankind by Christ. It was November, 1882, before the first part of the third volume could appear. These 629 pages are the continuation of book five about the work of redemption by Christ.

The fifth and last chapter (pages 455–629), finally deals with Mariology: "The virginal Mother of the Redeemer and her relationship to the work of redemption." We return to this subject in the second part of this Introduction.

The second part of the third volume was now five years in coming. Scheeben complains in the Preface about "the frequent sicknesses by which he was repeatedly forced to interrupt the work completely, or to continue it when he was only partly recovered." This section (pages 631–1005) contains the sixth book: "The redemption realized in the individual through the justifying grace of Christ." A part of this doctrine about grace must be left for the fourth volume on account of its extent. The Preface says: "The material for it is practically all collected, sorted, and put in order; therefore the following volume will be able to appear within a very short time, if God spares me." God did not preserve his health. On July 21, 1888, before a year had passed, when Scheeben was only fifty-two years old and was at the zenith of his genius, he was called by God out of this world. It seemed that God wished to impress the whole world with the lesson which Scheeben had expressed to Herder in his letter of November 29, 1881, as follows: "As so often in the past, the Lord let me again

feel strongly that He is not in need of anybody, for He makes a person unfit for work precisely when that person is at his best." His loyal friend, Benjamin Herder, joined him in heaven the very same year.

Although the *Dogmatic Theology* of Scheeben, ambitiously planned, remained incomplete, it may still correctly be called, with his other works, a *monumentum aere perennius*, which marks its author as one of the greatest, perhaps the greatest, dogmatist of these latter times. However, Scheeben did not exercise on his contemporaries the influence that we would expect in view of his many talents. The interest of the theologians, particularly in Germany, went in another direction; the exact scientific study of exegesis, patrology, and history of dogma forced speculative theology to the background. After Scheeben's death, his works, except the "Glories" and the "Mysteries," were little read, if they did not indeed fall into complete oblivion. Only in later years there sprang up, together with the liturgical movement and under its influence, a general urge to live the dogma more vividly, and consequently there followed a more profound and speculative insight into the mysteries of faith. The result was a spontaneous return to Scheeben. The appreciative introduction of Professor Grabmann preceding the reprint of *Natur und Gnade*, edited by him in 1922, indicated and at the same time partially caused this return. Karl Eschweiller, who in a perhaps somewhat too broad synthesis contrasted Scheeben as a representative of a "theology from faith" with Hermes as a "theologian from reason," also contributed toward renewing the appreciation of Scheeben among modern theologians.

In 1935, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary

of Scheeben's birth, the renewed interest in his theological work was clearly expressed, particularly during the festivities organized in his honor in Cologne by the *Katholische Akademikerverband*, in Freiburg by the publishing company of Herder, in Rome by the alumni of the Germanicum.²

On this occasion the students of the Germanicum were received in audience by the Pope. Pius XI recommended to them in warm words the study of Scheeben's theology and the imitation of his priestly virtues. He describes the "high and brilliant" theology of Scheeben with these remarkable words: "The entire theology of Scheeben bears the stamp of a pious ascetical theology; as another great theologian, Franzelin, said: 'I like ascetical books with much theology and dogma, and dogmatic books with much asceticism.' This is as it should be."³

In this concise outline of Scheeben's theological studies we could touch only the most important points. To be complete we really should have a look at his contributions to various periodicals and the *Kirchenlexicon* (second edition), and also at his controversies, reviews, and so on. The little we have mentioned may be sufficient, however, to put the Mariology, which we will now study more closely, in its place in the whole of his work.

SCHEEBEN'S MARIOLOGY

The Mariology is generally considered the most beautiful and original part of Scheeben's *Dogmatic Theology*. His uncommon knowledge of the Fathers of the Church

² See memorial volume, *M. J. Scheeben, alumno suo eximio, centesimo ipsius redente natali, Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum*, Rome, 1935.

³ See the circumstantial account of this audience in *Osservatore Romano*, March 11, 1935.

and theologians and the creative talents of his genius are therein demonstrated most brilliantly. All this is based on a deep and fervent devotion to the holy Mother of God, of which his first work, *Marienblutten*, already gives evidence. In his *Glories of Divine Grace* he dedicated a splendid chapter to "the grace and dignity of the Mother of God," after he had besought the grace of God in the Preface "through the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin, first-born daughter and at the same time Mother of Grace."

From the time of the writing of his *Mysteries of Christianity*, the plan of his Mariology was always in his mind. He writes: "Before leaving the mystery of the God-man we must turn our gaze to her from whom He received His humanity, and where He became one with the human race. We must show that that heart where all began and from which the divine Savior extends His sanctifying and life-giving power over the whole body of the redeemed, had itself to remain pure, redeemed in such a super-eminent way as to be almost a new creation; really a second Eve, whose life arose again afresh from the side of her heavenly Bridegroom."

However, Scheeben must for the present give up the development of these beautiful thoughts on account of the size of his book. But, to continue the reader's orientation in some degree in the matter of the doctrine regarding Mary, he refers in a note to "the rich theological contents of the work of Nicolas concerning the Blessed Virgin." He means *La Vierge Marie et le plan divin* of August Nicolas, 1807-88; Karl Reiching had translated the four volumes into German immediately after their appearance. By this one citation Scheeben shows that he

esteems the work very highly; in his later Mariology he will take many intuitions of this lay theologian and will give them a dogmatic foundation.

It may be evident from the following how deeply Scheeben had thrown himself body and soul into the doctrine concerning Mary long before he could work out his Mariology proper. In one of the most solid articles, which he gave in his periodical, *Das ökumenische Konzil*, in defense of papal infallibility, he dedicated not less than forty pages to a parallel between this recently defined truth and the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, both considered splendid "manifestations of the supernatural nature of Christianity." J. Schmitz, who republished them recently, though separately, calls them "a gem of Mariology."

Consequently, in the working out of his *Dogmatic Theology* we are not surprised that Scheeben could not be content even with his extensive contemplations on the divine motherhood in the course of his Christology, and could not take leave of the study of the redemption without dedicating a separate chapter to "the virginal Mother of the Redeemer and her relation to the work of redemption." No wonder, then, that, under the urge of his fervent love for Mary, this fifth chapter of the Christology developed into a monumental treatise, which up to the present has remained unsurpassed. In the Preface to the third volume of the *Dogmatic Theology* he admitted that the size of the Mariology had become considerably greater than he himself had expected and announced. To excuse the delay in publishing his sequel to the Christology, he himself points to the *moles laboris* it entailed and to the fact that, with regard to the Mariology "in the form in which I

thought I must conceive and develop it, practically no examples were at my disposal, that could lighten the labor of laying the foundation, and of consistently carrying through the main thought."

We cannot resist the temptation to quote here the following passage from his Preface, in which he presents, as it were, his Mariology to the reader.

"Mariology can and must be considered a link connecting the doctrine of the Redeemer and His work with that of the grace of Christ and its distribution by the Church. Mariology, thus conceived, is called to occupy an important place in the system of dogmatic theology. From this viewpoint it appears as the development of the profound concept manifested in the early Christian era, which ideally beholds Mary in the Church, and the Church in Mary (Apoc. 12:1). . . . As a treatise on the personal bride of Christ and the personal mother of mankind, Mariology becomes a rich source from which light is shed on the doctrine of the Church as a supernatural organism. . . . Hence the treatise on Mary, so dear to the heart of the faithful, must be treated scientifically, to avoid possible critical errors of spiritual writers and sacred speakers, which damage religion itself. For the real sources and principles of theology constitute the sound foundation for solid piety."

Scheeben, therefore, is indeed aware that he is performing pioneer work: great merit is due to him for having changed the Mariology into a scientific whole, forming an independent part of dogmatic theology. In this we see, as it were, two main ideas that give Scheeben's Mariology its originality and a lasting significance. First of all he realized that the exposition of the truths which revelation

teaches us about Mary should have an independent position in the theological system; secondly he discovered a principle that gives to that treatise on Mary the strict unity and close cohesion of a really scientific system. We will elucidate separately these two points somewhat more fully, hoping thus to guide the reader along the line of thought, which is not always easily followed in Scheeben's Mariology.

I. MARIOLOGY AS AN INDEPENDENT TREATISE IN DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

To understand the reasons prompting Scheeben to plan the Mariology as an independent treatise in dogmatic theology, we must go back for a moment to his exposition of the essence of theology in the First Book. Theology is there presented to us as the scientific knowledge of God and divine things, based on revelation, as it is given to us by the Church. It is a formal science, as it systematizes revealed data through reason, under the influence of the light of faith, into an essentially coherent organic whole according to a principle of unity. That principle of unity, from which "theology," doctrine about God, derives its name, is God, the absolute Good, and consequently is infinitely fruitful and communicative. Theology considers this fruitfulness and a communicativeness first of all in the Trinitarian life that unfolds on account of the divine nature itself, and secondly in the supernatural life that pours itself out into creation by virtue of the divine love.

A theological treatise is not any subdivision taken at random of that compositum of truths, grouped about this thought of God; it must also formally be an organic member of that system. It should, therefore, in its turn show a

systematic unity by itself and have an organic connection with the main whole. The question, then, of whether Mariology can and must be considered an independent treatise in dogmatic theology, comes to this: Do the revealed data about Mary really form a vital point in the organic whole of dogmatic truths?

The answer depends on the position we ascribe to Mary in the work of redemption, i.e., the position of mediation and intercession of the supernatural life on behalf of mankind. If we attribute to Mary no other significance than that she is the physical instrument of the Incarnation of the Son of God, she can, of course, appear in theology only on the occasion of the Incarnation. In that case a space can be given to Mary only in a first chapter of the Christology, which, as in the *Pars tertia* of the *Summa* of St. Thomas, would bear the title: *De ingressu Christi in mundum*.¹ Most theologians who follow the plan of the *Summa* in their scheme of exposition, have therefore inserted at that place alone a treatise on the privileges of Mary. This does not mean, however, that these theologians, any more than St. Thomas, have limited the greatness of Mary to her bodily motherhood; to the extent that they were guided by the living tradition of the Church, they had to treat in that narrow space the privileges of Mary, which no longer corresponded to the limiting title.

Mary's significance, limited solely to her physical function of mother, was advanced and maintained only by Protestants. Hence their complete failure to comprehend the Catholic devotion to Mary. Scheeben sketched in clear outline their attitude toward Mary. To those among them who no longer accept the godhead of Christ and have

¹ IIIa, q.27, Praeambulum.

dropped the supernatural character of Christianity, Mary is obviously nothing more than an ordinary woman, and the virginal conception is a mere legend. But even to those Protestants who still believe in the dogma of Nicaea, Mary is simply and solely the woman to whom the Redeemer owes His human existence. Consequently she can be compared only with the earth, of which the first man was formed; she is to them in no way at all the new Eve beside the new Adam. This all follows logically from the Lutheran concept, according to which human nature is only a "lump of clay," on which grace has no interior hold and which therefore cannot cooperate with the latter. From this also follows, linked with it, their concept of the Church, in which they are able to see only an aggregate of persons justified by faith and not at all the visible organ of the grace of redemption. Therefore it does not astonish Scheeben that the reformed Churches in his time, apparently in agreement, all rejected at the same time the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and the infallibility of the pope. He quotes the significant words of a Protestant, that Catholics defend and glorify in Mary their concept of the Church as mother and mediatrix of grace.

In their laudable attempts to reconcile these stray brethren to the concept that the Church has of Mary, some Catholics went to meet the Protestants somewhat too far at times. A prominent modern theologian, whose sharp criticism of Scheeben's Mariology we must also mention, Professor Bernhard Bartmann, may serve as an example. In a valuable work in apologetics, he refutes the Protestant allegation that Christ Himself was the first opponent to the veneration of Mary. His detailed study of the so-called disparaging words of Jesus to Mary, certainly de-

serves every attention, even if we do not always agree with the explanation given. However, we cannot follow his opinion in the assertion taken from the last chapter, that Mary's entire dignity is conclusively expressed in the title "Theotokos." From this the writer concludes that, except for the fact that she gave life to the Redeemer, no other part was intended for her in the economy of salvation than that of intercession with the application of the merits of redemption, in the same manner as the other saints in heaven, she being in that case at their head. The profound contemplation of Scheeben regarding Mary's cooperation, subordinate to Christ, in the work of redemption, is consequently dismissed with a slighting remark about the "Roman Mariologies" that had influenced him. We must hasten to say that Bartmann abandoned this narrow view of the matter, in his later writings, as will appear further.

The concept of the Mother of God, as it is approved by the Church today and lives in the hearts of the faithful, extends far beyond the boundaries of the idea that sees in her only the instrument of the Incarnation. Modern theologians must deal with defined, or at least commonly believed, truths regarding Mary, which can scarcely be deduced from the simple fact that she was the means by which Christ entered the world. In a complete dogmatic theology one must speak, for instance, of her Immaculate Conception, perpetual virginity, absolute sinlessness; of the "hyperdulia" due to her, of her mediatorship of grace, and of her bodily assumption into heaven.

Many authors treat these privileges of Mary apart from the Christology proper and present them in other treatises, as exceptions to general rules, e.g., as exemption

from original sin in the treatise *De Deo creante et elevante*, as anticipation of the resurrection in eschatology, as a special kind of *dulia* in the *De cultu sanctorum*. Apparently they have not yet recognized the fact that Mariology should have an independent place in dogmatic theology. Others group together all these truths about Mary (her divine maternity and her other privileges) in a single treatise entitled "Mariology," and publish it separately. However, a mere compilation of theses referring to one and the same subject matter is not, on that account, a theological treatise, but is called more correctly a monograph, such as one might write, for example, about St. John the Baptist or St. Joseph.

As long as we do not reduce the privileges of Mary to one organic whole, in which a vital point in the economy of salvation receives a rounded exposition, we cannot speak of a formal treatise of theology. Thus it is apparent that a Mariology is possible only when we ascribe to Mary, apart from her significance as physical mother of the Redeemer, an active role beside her Son in the very work of redemption.

We have already indicated sufficiently that Scheeben viewed the Mariology from this broader point of view. Moreover, it is quite evident from the title he gave to this part of his *Dogmatic Theology*, "The virginal Mother of the Redeemer and her relation to the work of redemption." We still wish to emphasize briefly the justification for this standpoint in the light of modern theology. Up to the present the Church has not defined anything regarding the cooperation of Mary in the work of redemption. During the last decades a powerful movement has arisen among theologians to obtain a dogmatic definition of

Mary's universal mediatorship of grace. However they do not yet agree about the best formulation. This is not the correct place to pursue the question further. It is enough to refer the reader to the book *Marialia* by Cardinal Bitremieux.

In general, not only the great mass of the laity, but also, in numerous instances, the ordinary teaching authority honors Mary with such titles as the following: the new Eve, Mother of divine grace, Mother and Queen of Christians, Mediatrix, Coredemptrix. Whatever may be the exact degree of theological certainty belonging to those various names, one thing at least may be affirmed with certainty, that under all those expressions there lies a basic truth, which the Church maintains as an inalienable part of the *depositum fidei*. We think that we cannot formulate that basic meaning better than in the words of Professor Bartmann himself, taken from a much discussed article, in which a more profound study of the tradition regarding Mary led him to abandon the negative thesis of his book mentioned above. He remarks: "The Fathers do not stop at the fact that Mary gave the Redeemer to the world, . . . they ascribe to her a certain personal, moral participation and cooperation in her Son's work of the redemption as well. . . . These ideas must have been spread throughout the Church of the second century, since Justin already presents them in such a solid form, and they found a general continuance in tradition." After he has traced this tradition, beginning with the patristic writings, through Scholasticism, on to the latest papal documents, he comes to the following conclusion: "One may consider it a dogma, held in the Church since the oldest times

of Christianity, that Mary is for us mediatrix of the grace of salvation."

We may therefore safely consider as *de fide* this concept of the participation of Mary in the work of redemption, taken by Scheeben in its entirety as the foundation of his Mariology; and this concept establishes sufficiently the perfect right of Mariology to be treated as an independent treatise of theology.

2. THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF MARIOLOGY

The fact that theologians have now generally come to realize that Mariology must be conceived as an independent theological treatise, proves that the problem of the basic principle of Mariology holds the center of interest.² Nothing can contribute more to the understanding of the lasting value and originality of Scheeben's basic thesis than a glimpse of the most important solutions, which were presented following his. We can take as a guide in this the remarkable study of Professor C. Feckes, who at present occupies Scheeben's chair in the Cologne seminary, and is attached with heart and soul to the ideas of his great predecessor.

It was evident that the first truth, which would be considered the main principle of Mariology, must be the title *Theotokos* (Mother of God), which expresses Mary's highest dignity and which had already been declared a dogma at the Council of Ephesus. Suarez had declared that the divine motherhood is the foundation of all Mary's privileges and had formulated the following thesis:

² See Bittremieux, *Marialia*, pp. 313 f.

"Comparatur haec dignitas matris Dei ad alias gratias creatas tamquam prima forma ad suas proprietates, et e converso aliae gratiae comparantur ad ipsam sicut dispositiones ad formam." ³ On the first Mary-days at Tongerlo, Belgium, in 1931, Professor C. Philips treated of "the divine motherhood as the source of all Mary's privileges." ⁴ Monsignor Ianotta evinces the same conviction in the title he gave to his recently published Mariology: *Theotocologia*.⁵

However, if we examine how these authors connect the various privileges of Mary with the divine motherhood, it is at once evident that the latter cannot count as a proper distinguishing principle of the former. E.g., the Immaculate Conception may be viewed as a material preparation for this motherhood, but not as a necessary disposition. We can, therefore, connect it only by means of an *argumentum convenientiae* with the proposed main principle. From this principle we can deduce no more than a *convenientia* with regard to the active role of Mary in the work of redemption and in the distribution of graces.

Some theologians think they can maintain the divine motherhood as a basic principle by extending the concept of it. Instead of the abstract concept applying the formal ingredients of motherhood in general to being the Mother of God, they place the concrete (others say "adequate") divine motherhood. But not all define this concrete motherhood of Mary in the same way. Cardinal Lepicier, for instance, premises the following stipulation: "Divina maternitas adaequate sumatur, scil. pro illo omni gratiarum

³ *De Incarnatione*, q. 27, disp. I, sec. 2; Venice, 1746.

⁴ *Report on the first Mary-days* (Tongerloo, Belgium, 1932), pp. 30-42.

⁵ *Theotocologia catholica seu scientia de Virgine Maria Deiparente*, 1925.

et donorum cumulo, quem Matris Dei dignitas de lege Dei ordinaria secumfert.”⁶

But how shall we determine which graces or privileges really belong to the dignity of the divine motherhood? For this motherhood itself cannot be taken as a norm for it, since the issue is precisely about those graces and privileges that are not contained in the formal concept of it and cannot be deduced from it by convincing proof. Therefore this norm again can be only the *convenientia*.

Father Bover⁷ would define the concrete motherhood of God differently. To him, the supreme principle of Mariology is the divine motherhood such as it was historically realized, and is really represented in revelation, which makes of the Mother of God, the new Eve. But no matter how closely this state of being the new Eve may appear intertwined with that of being the Mother of God, the concept “co-operation with the Redeemer” which lies in the title of “new Eve,” is and remains formally different from the concept of “motherhood of God.” So that, as was remarked elsewhere by Professor Bittremieux,⁸ we have here to deal with a double principle, and come to a solution that will be further discussed.

The second concept, “new Eve,” by itself, is taken by some other Mariologists as a fundamental principle of Mariology. Billot had moved in that direction already. In the foremost part of his Mariology, or rather in the part of his commentary on the *Pars tertia* of St. Thomas (*De ingressu Christi in mundum*), he states the following thesis:

⁶ A. M. Lepicier, *Tractatus de B.V. Matre Dei*, Paris, 1901.

⁷ J. M. Bover, S.J., *Sintesis organica de la Mariologia en funcion de la Asociacion de Maria a la obra redentoria de Jesucristo*, Madrid, 1929.

⁸ Bittremieux, “De principio supremo Mariologia,” in *Ephemerides theologiae Lovanienses*, VIII (1931), 250.

"De Virgine Matre generaliter tenendum est, quod in ordine reparationis eum locum tenet, quem tenuit Eva in ordine perditionis, . . . quo fit ut novo Adae, id est Christo, indissolubili nexu ad dissolvenda diaboli opera coniungi debuerit nova Eva, id est Maria."⁹

In a scholarly report at the Mary-days of Tongerlo, Belgium, in 1936, Father Deneffe defends the "new Eve" as the basic principle of Mariology;¹⁰ he qualifies the title by adding, "considered in the full sense, as she is shown to us in the Sacred Scriptures and tradition," i.e., as Mother of the God-man also.

We have difficulty in evading the impression that we have here a sort of *petitio principii*. In the concept of Mary as it appears concretely in revelation, there lies contained all that theology will ever be able to teach about Mary; but we are not for that reason allowed to take that concept itself of Mary as the basic principle of the theology regarding her. Theology seeks, as the ground for its systematic unity, a formal concept from which can be deduced and built up to an intelligible whole the entire complex of truths that form the concrete figure of the Mother of God. Certainly the concrete figure of Mary, taken from Sacred Scriptures and tradition, is the starting point of the theology concerning her, just as the revealed data is for every theological treatise; it is also the starting point in which that same figure, now penetrated with intelligibility, stands before us as a systematic whole. But it cannot be at the same time the inner principle of this intelligibility, any more than the revealed fact of the three Persons in the

⁹ Billot, *De Verbo Incarnato commentarius in tertiam partem S. Thomae* (7th ed., Rome, 1927), p. 386.

¹⁰ A. Deneffe, S.J., *Report on the 6th Mary-days* (Tongerloo, Belgium, 1937), pp. 70-82.

unity of the divine Being, and their mutual relations, is the supreme principle of the doctrine of the Trinity, but indeed, as Scheeben remarks, the principle that there is in God a *processio realis per intellectum et voluntatem*. "Starting from any article whatever of the revealed data about the Trinity," he says, "we can deduce from it a certain number of other truths, but only the proposition indicated contains a principle from which all other doctrines about the Trinity, objectively and completely, arise as from their root."

Formally speaking, we must say of Father Deneffe's principle as well as of that presented by Father Bover, that the concept of divine motherhood, although blended in the Sacred Scriptures and tradition into one concrete figure with the "New Eve," differs formally from the latter. To maintain the formal concept of the "New Eve" as the basic principle of Mariology, the task consequently rests on him to deduce from it the formal concept of the divine motherhood, which certainly cannot come about in any other way than on grounds of *convenientia*. Is it desirable, yes, even suitable, that we should give to Mary's highest privilege, that of being the Mother of God, the place of merely a deduced thesis in Mariology?

It is not surprising that at present many theologians, realizing the insufficiency of all these attempts to systematize Mariology under one main principle, come to the conclusion that we must absolutely accept two basic principles in Mariology: the divine motherhood and the concept of "New Eve," or, according to the formula of Father Terrien: Mary, Mother of God and mother of mankind. Professor Bittremieux was largely instrumental in making the *principium consortii*, as he calls it, find acceptance

next to the concept of Mother of God, with the Mariologists. For both principles have a far-reaching meaning, so that practically there is no single truth of Mariology that cannot be deduced from the one or the other. Furthermore, they are closely connected and mutually interdependent. The divine motherhood is entirely directed to the spiritual motherhood, and the latter finds its ontological basis in the former. However, this does not militate against the fact that the two concepts are formally different, and that no single strict reasoning allows the one to be deduced from the other. Complete unity is, therefore, not reached, and only when it would seem impossible to connect these two concepts in a higher synthesis, could we then content ourselves with this double principle.

It is this higher synthesis that is presented to us by Scheeben. He proceeds from the divine motherhood, but a more profound analysis of this article of revealed data makes him discover in that unique motherhood a formal aspect distinguishing this same motherhood, precisely as such, from every other human motherhood; namely, here the mother is, at the same time and inseparably, the bride of her Son. For it is absolutely proper to this unique motherhood that the Son, in His eternal existence as God, precedes the maternal actions; that the Son gives Himself to the mother of His own free will, in order to be clothed through her maternal actions with a nature equal to that of the mother.

If a human motherhood in its fullness can exist only on the grounds of a marriage in which the bride gives herself wholly and unconditionally to the bridegroom, in order to beget and educate the child in and with him, is it then conceivable that there does not lie at the root of this high-

est motherhood which excludes the cooperation of a male principle, the most complete, loving, and mutual surrender between the mother and Son, who gives Himself to her as *semen divinum*? Because among men the complete and essentially indissoluble mutual surrender of love of two persons has its solid form in the relationship between the bride and bridegroom, Scheeben does not hesitate, any more than does the liturgy in interpreting the Cantic of Canticles, to call this relation of Mary to the incarnating Word, which is inherent to her motherhood, a bridal one. In order to call Mary's basic privilege at the same time the main principle of Mariology, he speaks of a bridal motherhood of God, or a maternal state as bride of God. He thus unites into one formal principle the two qualities, which allowed the supporters of the last-mentioned solution to group all the Mariological truths: that of being the Mother of God, that and of being the new Eve. These two basic truths, which were regarded by them as two separate principles which could not be deduced from each other, are intrinsically united by Scheeben, as two truths really combined in Mary, but without essential connection, to one characteristic feature of Mary with two complementary aspects.

We take the liberty of stressing this unity, because it has been presented as if Scheeben united two formally different basic principles with words only, as if the formula "the bridal motherhood of God" were really synonymous with "Mary, Mother of God and bridal helper of Christ." But, according to Scheeben's concept, this separation is impossible: Mary's motherhood is essentially bridal, and her state as bride essentially maternal, just as man is inseparably a being of body and soul, and Christ a unity of

God and man. Not the individual *formalitates*, "mother" and "bride," are considered by him as the principle of the Mariological systematization, but their formal unity in the one basic principle. For Scheeben this being inseparably bride and mother, as contrasted with the one divine Person of the Word Incarnate, forms the distinguishing mark belonging to the person proper of Mary (her personal character), in which all her other privileges take root—the human interpretation of the eternal, simple idea of God, which underlies her creation and predestination.

Now, how much truth is in this principle? Is it so unsailable that we can safely take it as basis of the entire Mariology? Let us first prevent a misunderstanding: the one and only basis of certainty of all truths about Mary is and remains the divine revelation, as authentically presented to us by the infallible teaching authority of the Church. But a logical, characteristic principle of a theological treatise does not need to be a revealed truth: the theoretical basic principle of the doctrine about the Trinity, as mentioned before, is only theologically certain. It is sufficient that such a principle proceeds from revelation through an irrefutable reasoning. Its real use as a basic principle must be judged from the fact of whether it permits or forbids the arrangement of all truths which materially form a certain treatise, into one intrinsically coherent whole. With regard to the data about Mary, it will no doubt appear to all those who spare no pains to work their way through his masterly treatise, that the fundamental principle of Scheeben's Mariology does this indeed.

Scheeben's Mariology is by no means easy reading; it is a book to be studied. Therefore a reader will not find in

it material ready to hand for sermons on Mary; many thoughts, and even the fundamental principle, will perhaps never be accessible to the mass of simple and uneducated faithful. But we venture to promise confidently that whoever tries to enter into Scheeben's train of thought will find in it, together with a deeper insight into Mary's sublime significance for salvation, an inexhaustible treasure of vital worth and a firm foundation on which to build up in self and in others a solid devotion to the Queen of Heaven.

To make the reader acquainted with Scheeben's Mariological synthesis, we have thought it better to lay before him the original thesis almost in its entirety. Only a very small number of texts, which certainly were out of date have been left out. On the other hand, we have added to the Mariology proper those parts of the Christology that appeared indispensable to the complete understanding of the specifically Mariological theses, and that Scheeben himself refers to in the introduction to this part of his *Dogmatic Theology*. These parts were inserted under the title, "Christological Foundations of the Mariology," after the chapter with the introductory considerations.

In the translation, the greatest possible fidelity to the original was adhered to. To make the reading easier, Scheeben's long sentences were almost everywhere divided into shorter ones; with the same end in view, many paragraphs also were divided.

The references to the Fathers of the Church or to theologians, that appear with Scheeben in the text itself, are placed as footnotes, often amplified or rectified without mention of this alteration. As to the patristic quotations, we refer to volume and column of the Greek or Latin Pa-

trology of Migne by the abbreviation *PG* or *PL* respectively. Father A. Seeldrayers, S.J., was very helpful in looking up references and translating them from German into Flemish; and sincere thanks are extended to him here. The patristic texts themselves were rendered as they appear in Migne; where Scheeben's quotations differ from it, this fact is mentioned in a note.

In the additional notes, the greatest possible brevity was used; of the newer works in general, those only were cited which best give the present status of the question, and the place where the reader can find the latest literature about the subject treated.

Scheeben's theological work concerning Mary was rendered into Flemish by a competent translator, the Reverend H. B. van Waes, S.J. It was provided with the necessary annotations by the Reverend E. Druwé, S.J., who also wrote the introduction. The present English version is a translation of the Flemish.

In 1935, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of Scheeben's birth, Pope Pius XI recommended the study of Scheeben's ascetical theology and the imitation of his priestly virtues.

May the labor of this great theologian be gratefully received. It is sincerely to be hoped that, by means of this version, the influence of his theological aspirations will produce more abundant fruit over a wider field.

T. L. M. J. Geukers

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PART I
THE CONCEPT AND SOURCES OF
MARIOLOGY

Introduction ¹

IN THE Dogmatic system of the Catholic Church the Mother of Christ appears next to Christ, the new Adam, not merely as the living earth, of which He is formed, but, as the protevangelium ² has given us to understand, she comes also into the foreground as the new Eve, i.e., a person who is connected with Christ through the most intimate and living communication, and who, in and by Him, presides over the whole universe, as Eve with Adam presided over the earthly world. With Christ she forms the cornerstone, the root as well as the crown of the supernatural order, and through her activity she has an intimate share in His work of redemption.

On the other hand, the mother of the Redeemer is the first and most perfect fruit of the redemption, through the personal richness of her supernatural life and through her activity. With regard to her dignity, virtue, and activity, she prefigures the grace of redemption, to be distributed to all other redeemed persons. In other words: Mary, the spiritual mother of each individual redeemed soul and of the Church as a whole, is the model both of the divine filiation of grace of redeemed persons and of the heavenly motherhood of the Church.

¹ Scheeben refers to the following literature: Suarez, *De Incarnatione*, II, q. 27, disp. I in prooem.; Theoph. Raynaud, *Diptycha Mariana*, prooem.; Malou, *L'Immaculée Conception*, especially chaps. 8-9.

² Gen. 3:15.

For all these reasons Mary occupies a place, essential and exalted, in the divine plan of the world as in the dogma and life of the Church. Mariology forms an organic part of dogmatics and it is treated as such in St. Thomas.

Yet, from both these points of view, Mariology has acquired a special significance through the contention of early and modern Protestantism against the Catholic doctrine of grace and the Church, with which the dispute about Mary's privileges in question went hand in hand. That is why only recently heresy instinctively attacked the Immaculate Conception of Mary together with the infallibility of the supreme head of the Church. It is quite correct for a Protestant scholar to think that Catholics glorify and defend in Mary their mystical conception of the Church as the mother and mediatrix of grace.

About Mary's place in the divine plan of the world, we should note what St. Bernard says:

In a substantial manner Christ effected salvation in the center of the earth, namely, in the womb of the Virgin Mary who is called the Center of the Earth because of her extraordinary characteristics. For to her as to the center, as to the altar of God, as to the cause of things, and as to the economy of the ages do they look who are in heaven and those in hell, and those who have gone before us, and those who are now, and those who shall follow: those in heaven that they may be restored, those in hell that they may be freed; those who have gone before us that they may be found faithful, and those who follow that they may be glorified. Therefore all generations shall call her blessed, the Mother of God, the Mistress of the World, the Queen of Heaven . . . who has given life and glory to all generations. For in her the angels find joy, the just grace, and the sinners forgiveness. Deservedly the eyes of all creatures are turned toward her, because in her, by

her, and from her the benign hand of God re-created that which He had created.³

Mary's exalted position in the dogmatic theology of the Church in the face of all heresies, forms the main idea of the old adage: Thou alone hast destroyed all the heresies in the whole world, or, she alone has brought to dust every heretical depravity. This thought corresponds with the protevangelium; the heresies are regarded as the seed, or the head of the serpent. Such expressions are found in the Fathers of more ancient times: e.g., "scepter of right faith" in Cyril of Alexandria, in a discourse delivered at Ephesus.⁴ This happened because of the fact that the old heresies attacked Christology and that through the well-established position of Mary the clearest light was shed on all the aspects of Christology.⁵

This not only applies to the more modern heresies, so far as, by denying the ancient doctrine of the godhead of Christ, they deny in general the supernatural order in Christianity, but also to the specific Protestant heresies about grace and the Church. So far as Protestantism still believes in the divinity of Christ, it regards Mary only as the earth from which the first Adam has been taken, and not as a person who has the closest, mutually spiritual relations with Christ. This fits in completely with the doctrine of the Reformation, according to which human nature in general is as a "lump of clay," which was not changed through grace to its very essence and which could not cooperate in the reception of grace. According

³ Serm. 2 de Pentec., 4; *PL*, CLXXXIII, 327. In St. Bernard the sentence begins with *Tunc iam*.

⁴ *PG*, LXXVII, 992.

⁵ For the meaning of the proverb, see in detail St. Peter Canisius, *De Deipara Virgine*, Bk. V, chap. 9.

to the Catholic concept, however, Mary represents the living, passive and active susceptibility to the regenerating grace. The Fathers acknowledge the significance that Mariology gives the doctrine of the Church to the extent that they delight to picture the latter in the image taken from the former.

As for the name "Mary," there can be no doubt, according to the whole analogy of revelation, that it must possess, as much as the name of the Redeemer, a meaning by virtue of divine inspiration, which corresponds to the dignity and position of her who bears it. Especially as the Fathers also attach such meaning to the traditional names of Mary's parents: Joachim ("preparation of the Lord"), Anna ("grace"). Yet it is not settled what this meaning is according to the etymology of the word.

The ancients considered the Hebrew "Mirjam" as a compound of two words: *jam* ("more") and *mar* (from *marar*, "to drop, drops"; or *marah*, "to be bitter"). The meaning of both words inclines toward *mor* (a bitter, dripping resin). Hence this explanation was given: "amarum mare, myrrha maris, stilla maris"; but, as it was rightly felt that "stilla" here does not imply much, it was later changed into "stella maris." Philologically all these explanations are weak, and theologically can be utilized only with difficulty.

The etymologists agree that the name has only one root. If the root *marah* is the basis of it, its meaning becomes either "bitterness" or "fatness." According to the modern way of speaking, this does not give an elegant meaning, it is true, but in its Eastern meaning it would fit in splendidly as characteristic of her who, as the seat of the "Anointed" pre-eminently, represents the "fullness of

grace" in an eminent manner. Others have recourse to the root *rum* ("to be exalted"), and interpret from it, "the exalted one," the "mistress"; in this way they apply the explanation of the Syrian Fathers.

The best and richest explanation undoubtedly is the one that St. Jerome⁶ gives, viz.: "enlightening" or "their enlightening," from *jarah* ("jacere, effundere guttas et radios," hence "irrigare, illuminare"). It characterizes Mary's own position and activity, that is, her divine motherhood. In virtue of this privilege, according to the expression of the Church, she reflects as a spotless mirror the eternal light of the world, which is first poured into herself and illuminates her; as mother of the spiritual and heavenly life she is the mediatrix of the light of grace to mankind.

In this way the meaning "stella maris" is also submerged in the name "Mary." However, the full significance of the name "Mary" is first reflected in the "aurora" of the Cantic of Canticles and in the "woman clothed with the sun" of the Apocalypse. Besides, the name is closely related and is analogous to the names of the Redeemer, "Jesus" and "Christ." On the other hand it characterizes strikingly the one who bears it, as the antithesis of Eve; it formally places the new Eve as mother of the heavenly and spiritual life of men in contrast with the first Eve as mother of a purely natural life, and also of sin. For that very reason it represents Mary at the same time as the prototype of redeemed mankind and of the Church.

The term "Mariology," conceived in this way, would,

⁶ St. Jerome, *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum*, PL, XXIII, 789; but in sec. 842 he gives preference to *stilla maris sive amarum mare*. From *stilla* originated later *stella*.

like "Christology," indicate not only the material object, but also the formal one, i.e., the complete content of this part of theology.⁷

THE STARTING POINT OF MARIOLOGY

The dogmatic doctrine regarding the mother of the Redeemer, so far as it is expressed in the definitions of the Church, may be regarded as the explanation and development of the words of the Apostles' Creed (in the old Roman form): "Natus de Spiritu Sancto et Maria Virgine." For this proves that Mary, as true Mother of Christ, is truly Mother of God; and on the other hand that, not only in this motherhood itself but also for the sake of this motherhood, she is in general and simply a virgin espoused to the Holy Ghost, one who in every respect, in spirit and in body, in a narrower as well as a broader sense, has always remained spotless and inviolate. In this way the definition of the Immaculate Conception of Mary can be correctly regarded as the ultimate explanation of her absolute virginity.

⁷ To this day no further meaning of Mary's name is found. It was a girl's name much in use at that time. Probably no particular meaning was attached to it any longer. In any case the parallel Mariology-Christology could not hold, because "Christ" was an official name (the Anointed, Messiah), added to his proper name "Jesus." In that case the parallel should at least be *Jesuology*.

CHAPTER I

Mary in the New Testament

A PART from the history of the infancy and boyhood of Christ, the New Testament does not often mention the Blessed Virgin. We find Christ Himself refraining, as do the apostles, from definitely pointing out her exalted and influential position. On the contrary, some of His utterances, superficially considered, seem even to obscure the exalted state of Mary.

The reasons for this comparative obscurity of Mary in the books of the New Testament lie elsewhere. It does not mean in the least that Christ and the apostles have not recognized Mary's exceptional dignity; the seemingly disparaging utterances have in view only this end, to preclude an all too human conception of her motherhood.

On the other hand the praises of Mary from the lips of the angel at the Annunciation and of Elizabeth at the first acknowledgment of Mary's divine motherhood, hold in embryo all that can be said to glorify her. The picture that St. John draws of her at the beginning of the second part of the Apocalypse, where he borrows from her the features for his vision of the Church, is so magnificent that human imagination has never found words to improve upon it.

In the historical narrative of the New Testament, Mary often comes to the foreground significantly in circumstances such that she could and must show her exalted

position. It was thus she appeared at the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, and on the occasion of His first miracle, which took place at her intercession; again, at Jesus' expiatory death and in the upper room at Jerusalem, where the disciples came to pray before and at the time of the descent of the Holy Ghost.¹

That Christ and the apostles do not explicitly throw light upon and celebrate the glory of Mary, is abundantly explained by the fact that the complete attention of the faithful was at first directed to Christ Himself; or rather, that His glory and therefore His personal eminence above that of His mother had to be established first, before there could be any question of the glory of the mother, which from His glory alone overflows on her. At the same time it is obvious that during Mary's lifetime her humility was to be respected, shielded, and secured.

Some explain the apparently disparaging utterances of Christ in this way, that they must serve to safeguard Mary from the danger of pride in her greatness. This is not correct. Just as in the case of Christ's glory and eminence, so was it here only a matter of practicing the virtue of humility, which was the more fitting to Mary since Jesus also wished to practice it to the fullest extent. Christ intended to show quite definitely that He stood toward Mary not in the same relation as an ordinary man to his mother; and He wished this shown not for her sake but for the sake of mankind. By making His own divine dignity felt, He pointed at the same time to the true form and meaning of Mary's motherhood as a divine motherhood.

¹ About the comparative obscurity of Mary in the Gospels, Scheeben refers to St. Peter Canisius, *De Deip. Virg.*, Bk. IV, chap. 24. See J. Spencer Northcote, *Mary in the Gospels*, London, 1867.

It is absurd to find something derogatory or a denial of Mary's maternal dignity in the fact that the Savior addresses her as "woman" at various times—at Cana and from the Cross—particularly since Christ, when He addressed her in that very manner from the Cross, gave evidence of His filial love toward her. The address merely implies that Christ did not speak as a child, placed under Mary's maternal care and authority as at Nazareth, but in the exercise of His divine dignity and mission. The Hebrew expression (corresponding to "What is it to me and to thee, woman?"), intended not so much for Mary herself as for the bystanders, means simply that Christ, with regard to His mission, is withdrawn from the law of filial obedience: more correctly, that He will not comply with the request of Mary as Son of man, who depends on her, but as a more exalted son, the Son of God. For the words do not exclude the favorable response, but include it. This is proved by the issue of the request as well as by the hint given by Mary to the waiters.

When, during the exercise of His ministry, Jesus was sought by His relatives who wished to speak to Him, He said: "My mother and My brethern are they who hear the word of God and do it."² Again, when the woman from the crowd called the body and the breasts of His mother blessed,³ He pointed out that all without exception are blessed, who hear the word of God and keep it. On both occasions nothing was farther from His intention than to slight His mother. He preferred to discourage an all too human and carnal idea of the relationship of His mother to Himself, for this idea was linked up with a defective

² Luke 8:21; cf. Matt. 12:49; Mark 3:34.

³ Luke 11:27.

and an entirely false understanding of His higher, divine nature; and in referring to the true character of this relationship He offered at the same time a practical lesson for His listeners.

In the first case (Luke 8:19 ff.), Christ's higher character as Son of the heavenly Father was apparently acknowledged by those present. But from this character it followed inevitably that Mary could become Mother of Christ, not as other mothers through the will of a man,⁴ but only through obedience to the heavenly Father; her whole maternal relationship to Christ bears the characteristic of perfect surrender to the Father.

In the second case (Luke 11:27), the divinity of Christ was indeed not excluded in the exaltation of Mary. Neither was there any particular stress laid upon the fact that her motherhood distinguished itself from any other natural motherhood through anything else than the fact that it had as its final term a man who performed miracles. Hence Christ gives us to understand that the loftiness of motherhood rests in Mary on this, that she did not receive and bear a mere human being but the real Word of God; that she not only received it in her body but also in her spirit and spiritual love, or, that she also took it into her body and fed it rather through her spirit and spiritual love.⁵

The observation is rightly made, even by Luther in his commentary of 1518 on the Magnificat, that the Gospels in reality exalt Mary enough, inasmuch as they call her by the name "Mother of Jesus" eight different times. When this fact is observed, the praises of the angel and of Elizabeth speak for themselves.

⁴ John 1:13.

⁵ For all these texts, see St. Peter Canisius, *op. cit.*, Bk. IV, chaps. 18-23; Northcote, *op. cit.*, chaps. 8-11.

In the salutation of the angel, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women,"⁶ are indicated the supernatural privileges granted to Mary in virtue of her destiny to be the Mother of Jesus, which would be completed and sealed through the conception of Jesus: viz., an entirely exceptional state of grace, through which she stands in special connection with God, and is blessed by God above all other women.

The angel does not use the first predicate, "full of grace," as apposition to the name Mary, which he only later pronounces, but as an appellative name of a person. In the salutation of Elizabeth the elevation of Mary's state of grace is most closely connected with the one of the blessing of the fruit of her womb. Hence in former times Mary's state of grace was, with every right and for merely exegetical reasons, always considered exceptional and without a peer in its kind as the sanctification of Christ; to her the most perfect likeness to this latter was ascribed.

The trifling distinction, already brought forward by Erasmus, and afterward time and again exploited by Protestants, is very weak, namely, that nothing is said in the Greek text of the fullness of grace and that there is no question at all of a fulfillment with grace, but only of a certain, vague favor or well-pleasingness. For, according to the analogy of Eph. 1:6,⁷ the Greek word *κεχαριτωμένη* indicates in reality a person to whom grace has been granted

⁶ Luke 1:28.

⁷ Eph. 1:6: "Unto the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He hath graced us in His beloved Son." Lagrange (*Evangelie selon St. Luke*, Paris, 1921, pp. 28 ff.) remarks, regarding Luke 1:28: "Si Erasme a traduit *gratiosa*, tous les modernes expliquent le mot par Eph. 1:6." Cited by C. Dillenschneider, *La Mariologie de S. Alphonse de Liguori* (Fribourg, 1931), I, 8-15, where one finds a most readable characteristic feature of Erasmus' Mariological thesis.

in the theological sense, i.e., a person who is equipped with grace, made pleasing to God through grace; "fullness of grace" is only a correct expression for the exceptional, entirely unique wealth of grace which is meant here.

Again, this entirely exceptional blessing of Mary above all other women is not lessened through the fact that the following is also said of Judith: "Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the most high God, above all women upon the earth."⁸ In both cases the aim and reason of the blessing differ tremendously, and what is still more, Judith was only a prototype of Mary.

The three attributes in the salutation of the angel may be defined as follows: through the first one, "full of grace," Mary is characterized as daughter of the heavenly Father; through the second one, "the Lord is with thee," as bride of the Logos; through the third one, "blessed art thou among women," as temple and instrument of the salutary power of the Holy Ghost; or further, as the likeness of God and as adorned by Him, united with God and protected by Him, filled with God and endowed by Him with the greatest riches.

The words "thou hast found grace with God"⁹ indicate that the described privileges of Mary have connection with the divine motherhood as with the highest and most exceptional gift of grace given to her, and that the Son, destined for the salvation of the world, was in the first place and in an entirely unique manner given to Mary for her own glorification and salvation. Consequently as the three praises in the angel's salutation stand in proportion to this gift of grace, reversed, this gift of grace also gives

⁸ Jdth. 13:23.

⁹ Luke 1:30.

these praises their completion: for it is the highest state of grace, benediction and communication with God.

This passage from the Apocalypse has reference to the Church: "And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars."¹⁰ The features of the vision are borrowed from Mary; Mary is not taken merely as an ordinary example or even as a prototype of the Church, but as a prototype that is organically united to the Church and radically concerns and represents it, and also works both in it and through it.

We should note: (1) the woman brings forth a son, who is none other than Christ, "who was to rule all nations with an iron rod."¹¹ This can be applied to Mary only. (2) Next to the woman the dragon (the serpent) appears, which persecutes her and her Son, without being able to harm them. A clear allusion to the protevangelium. (3) Then it is not in the style of Sacred Scripture to personify abstract things in any other way but through real persons, who are treated as types.¹² (4) The typical and organic mutual relations between Mary and the Church lie, in general, and in particular also with regard to this text, in the firm and universal tradition of the Church.

Accordingly the heavenly glory of the woman, expressed in this great sign, must in the first place be traced to Mary, who is prophesied by Isaias as the divine sign.¹³ In her each single feature of the vision is of itself obvious, having almost no ground without the thought of her. The main feature is the woman being clothed with the sun,

¹⁰ Apoc. 12:1.

¹¹ Apoc. 12:5.

¹² See Newman, *A Letter to Pusey*, London, 1866.

¹³ Isa. 7:14.

through which she receives her place in the sun, thus being in the center of the heavens, and for that very reason the moon lies under her feet, while she carries the twelve stars of the zodiac above her as a crown. These grand features find in Mary their realization in the fact that she was clothed with the sun of the godhead in the conception of the Logos. As a result of it she is exalted above the baseness and changeableness of the sublunary world and also excels its beauty. Finally, all heavenly beings and powers, the angels in particular, but also the human beings, of whom first of all the twelve apostles come to mind, gather round her, just as the apostles were also outwardly united with her during the beseeching for and receiving of the Holy Ghost.

The pains of childbirth, ascribed to the woman, find their application in Mary, only so far as she has cooperated through co-sufferings in the second birth of Christ, through His death and Resurrection, and at the same time in His third birth in the faithful.

CHAPTER II

Mary in the Old Testament

THE Old Testament speaks less explicitly about Mary than the New. Yet she is not only definitely prophesied as the Mother of the Emmanuel;¹ but in the protevangelium of Genesis² she is already thus presented as the Mother of the Redeemer, that she must be, in and with Him, the guaranty and instrument of redemption. So far as Christ is concerned, the contents of the protevangelium are indeed defined through later prophesies; though the protevangelium has the preference with regard to the connection of Mary with Christ and her relationship to the work of redemption. In general it throws so much light upon the later prophesies that, in connection with Isa. 7:14, it is rightly used as the classic text for Mariology.

The concrete application of "woman" to Mary in the protevangelium is absolutely sound not only dogmatically, but also exegetically.³ It is difficult to understand how Catholic theologians have at times called in question its strictly scientific use in favor of the privileges of Mary. Exegetically much more open to dispute would be the contention, advocated by the greater number of theologians and particularly by St. Jerome, that in the text

¹ Isa. 7:14.

² Gen. 3:15.

³ Here Scheeben refers to his explanation of the protevangelium. See Appendix 1.

"there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse and a flower shall rise up out of this root," ⁴ the "rod" refers to Mary and not to Christ as "flower" does. In view of the protevangelium, the thought contained in this figure, viz., that Mary forms a whole with Christ, which, as one divine work and one heavenly plant, had to be the guaranty and principle of the salvation of the world, is in complete agreement with Sacred Scripture.

In Jeremias, "the Lord hath created a new thing upon the earth: a woman shall compass a man," ⁵ the direct Messianic meaning is generally contested, by Catholic theologians too. Particularly as there is here, according to the Hebrew text, no question of mother "and child." The Hebrew term used here for "woman," viz., *neqêbhah* (from the same root as *nequêb*, "cave, cell"), points to the opposite, and the evident analogy with Isa. 7:14, together with the counterpart from the Apocalypse, "a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun," justifies still more the Mariological application of the new creation "on earth" presented here. When he who is encompassed by the woman is called "man" and not "child," it includes so little the idea of "encompass in the womb," that the "new thing" rather consists in just that which the prophet points out. The word "man" characterizes the being, enclosed in the mother's womb, as a person who, according to the spirit, is not subjected to development, but who already possesses the full maturity of a man. It is a

⁴ Isa. 11:1; Jerome, *PL*, XXIV, 144.

⁵ Jer. 31:22. This interpretation, which is also defended by Knabenbauer, among others, in his commentary on Jeremias (*Cursus Scripturae Sacrae*, Paris, 1889), is at present discounted by many, among others by Condamin, in *Revue biblique*, 1897, pp. 396-404. In the translation by Canisius: "The Sacred Scriptures, O.T.," IV (1936), 269, this last explanation is advocated: The woman (Israel) returns to her man (Jahweh).

person who does not at all stand toward the woman in the dependence of a child, but is to her as bridegroom to bride; and rightly so, since this person himself also makes the woman his mother. Thus "a woman shall compass a man" runs according to the form and contents quite concurrently with "a virgin shall conceive and bear a son: and his name shall be called Emmanuel."

Absolutely undisputed is the Mariological application of the text from Micheas: "The time wherein she that travaileth shall bring forth." ⁶

Apart from the direct and formal prophecies, the Church has used a great many other references from the Old Testament to throw light upon and partly also to prove Mariological theses. Often they have been used without difference as proper and independent proofs, e.g., in the question of the Immaculate Conception—and thus their real demonstrative force has been lessened. On the other hand, notably in recent years, all conclusive force has been denied to these same texts, and their application to Mary has been considered a mere adaptation. Hence only the value of a witness has been attached to the explanation of the texts, as found in the Fathers and theologians, and also in the liturgy, for the conviction of those who thus adapt them.

Both sides went too far: here also truth lies between the two. The more important texts serve, according to the mind of the Holy Ghost, to be applied to Mary as to their immediate object, partly in immediate, partly in indirect, spiritual or virtual sense. Thus Mary appears: in the Psalms as the "sanctuary"; in the Canticle of Canticles as the "bride"; in the Book of Wisdom as the "first born

⁶ Mich. 5:3.

daughter of God" and as the "heavenly Queen and Mother of the world."

The application to Mary of "bride" from the Cantic of Canticles comes closest to the literal sense; and it is partly understood in this sense. Consequently the Cantic of Canticles, with regard to its formal conclusive force, ought to be dealt with first. But according to the association of thought, the order of time of the texts and in general the genetic order, the division indicated above naturally asserts itself. The thought of the living temple of the Lord's Anointed and of God Himself, attaches itself immediately to the prophetic conception: a virgin shall bear Emmanuel and "a woman shall compass a man"; on the other hand it tends to the notion "bride of Christ" and "daughter of God." Just as the idea "bride of Christ" is present in the Psalms, the thought of "temple" is found in the Cantic of Canticles, in which the bride is compared to a garden, and in the Book of Proverbs.⁷

THE PSALMS

Of old, those texts from the Psalms which celebrate the glory and holiness of the chosen and privileged "temples of God," were already used in a Mariological sense. In a direct sense these temples meant: on earth, the city of Jerusalem or mount Sion, on which the King's stronghold stood; and the temple situated there, particularly the ark of the covenant; above the earth, the sun or the heavens. These pure material and lifeless dwellings are clear types of the spiritual and living temples of God: the Church of the New Testament and in particular of Mary, the temple

⁷ Ps. 44; Cant. 4:12; Prov. 9:1.

of God pre-eminently. Hence these texts point to Mary in a typical sense. Apart from this, all that is said about the glory and holiness of the other dwellings of God, applies to Mary intrinsically, a fortiori and in the highest manner. There we have a typical and a virtual sense at the same time.

The most important psalm which belongs here is psalm 86: "The foundations thereof are in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Sion above all the tabernacles of Jacob. Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God. . . . Shall not Sion say: This man and that man are born in her? And the Highest Himself hath founded her." Sup-plementarily the following texts belong to it: "The stream of the river maketh the city of God joyful; the Most High hath sanctified His own tabernacle. God is in the midst thereof; it shall not be moved; God will help it in the early morning" (Ps. 45); "The Lord hath chosen Sion: He hath chosen it for His dwelling" (Ps. 131); "The mountain of God is a fat mountain, a curdled mountain, . . . a mountain in which God is well pleased to dwell; for there the Lord shall dwell unto the end" (Ps. 67). From psalm 18, which undoubtedly has reference to Christ and the Church in a typical sense, the Fathers used the words: "He hath set his tabernacle in the sun, and He, as a bridegroom coming out of his bride chamber, hath rejoiced." From the connection of "tabernacle" with the "bride chamber," from which the bridegroom comes forth, this text derives a particular typical relationship to Mary and still more so according to the Hebrew text, where the analogy also shows forth "the woman clothed with the sun."

THE CANTICLE OF CANTICLES

The Canticle of Canticles represents in allegorical and literal sense the marriage of Christ with mankind, or with the Church in its entirety and in each individual soul. Without doubt Mary in particular is understood by the "bride." What is still more, in all expressions describing the glory of the bride and the closeness of her union with the royal bridegroom, Mary is to be understood before the Church. For the marriage of mankind, or the Church, with Christ is first and chiefly solemnized in Mary in the most real and ideal manner; the name of the bride, "Sulamith," i.e., queen of peace and peace-bearer (derived from the name of the Bridegroom, Solomon), is realized in her in the fullest meaning.⁸ Hence the description of the bride (Cant. 1:8-16; 2:2-10; 3:6; chap. 4; 6:3-9) is with every reason applied to Mary. The first two references and 6:9 can easily be traced to her alone.

In the same way the second half of psalm 44 has also relation to her, for it contains a "hymn to the beloved one," which constitutes the Canticle of Canticles in embryo.

THE SAPIENTIAL BOOKS

Those texts⁹ from the Sapiential Books which describe the origin and position, glory and activity, of Wisdom personified, are applied to Mary in the liturgy of the Church. This occurs so far as Wisdom is represented as the beginning of all the ways of God and the first-born of

⁸ The word *sulamith* has nothing to do with *salem* ("to be complete"), from which is derived *salom* ("peace"); here it is only a different reading of *sunamith*, inhabitant of Sunem. See Szczespanski, *Geogr. Hist. Palestinae Antiquae* (Rome, 1928), pp. 137, 207.

⁹ Prov., chap. 8; Eccclus., chap. 24; Wisd., chap. 7.

God's whole creation. In virtue of her first and highest origin from God, she is His most perfect image and likeness, partner and helper, thus in an eminent manner "daughter of God," i.e., child and bride at the same time, the one in the form of the other, and as such she is to the world queen of all things and mother of life and light.

The application of these texts to Mary is a formal testimony that the Church considers Mary an image of Wisdom personified. According to an entirely unique likeness to her prototype, Mary so closely resembles the latter that all the qualities of the prototype, described here, are also proportionally hers. Thus the picture of Mary's qualities, as flowing forth from the application of these texts, may be considered justified, at least on the strength of the authority of the Church.

The Church does not fix offhand the real equality and similarity of the individual features of our description, merely through a comparison with the stated individual privileges of Mary from other sources. Undoubtedly from the close relationship of Mary to the person of Wisdom the Church has gathered that this representation must proportionately befit Mary as well. It may properly be accepted that the application of these texts to Mary as a *sensus consequens* has been the intention of the Holy Ghost.

The relation of Mary to the person of Wisdom consists in this. As the "aurora of the light of wisdom" and the "woman clothed with the sun," she is to the "incarnate Wisdom," in an entirely unique manner, His "seat," "vessel," and "abode" and at the same time His bride. In this quality she forms a whole with Him, in an analogous way to that of Eve with Adam. Eve and Adam in contrast with

the visible world belong together so essentially from the point of view of natural "image and likeness of God," that in this respect the description of the qualities of the man naturally also embraces the woman in a proportionate way; that is, so far as she is with and next to the man as his image, an image of God as well. This holds good of the image and likeness of God in the incarnate Wisdom with regard to Mary.

Indeed, in the Cantic of Canticles, where the bridegroom under the term "oil poured out"¹⁰ is none other than the incarnate Wisdom, the bride is throughout depicted as the most perfect image of the bridegroom, for the greater part even with the same features, with which Wisdom also is represented: the sweet-smelling garden, rich in oil, and the well of living waters.¹¹

Only one difficulty presents itself. In these texts¹² Wisdom is not merely depicted as the incarnate Wisdom, but predominantly in its being and workings before the Incarnation, i.e., in its supernatural origin and being. One conclusion alone follows, that the entire description, in all its parts, does not suit Mary in the same way, and that with regard to the features referred to, a further link and reason to do so are still required.

Both link and reason are available. For the qualities which belong to Wisdom by itself likewise proportionately belong to the incarnate Wisdom and are reflected in

¹⁰ Cant. 1:2.

¹¹ Cf. Cant. 4:10 ff. with Ecclus. 24:17 ff.

¹² The thoughts developed here on the Mariological meaning of the Sapiential Books are taken from the personal study of Scheeben. They have an important and timely meaning, because they introduce us into a sphere of thought which is being scrutinized profoundly, sometimes almost recklessly so, by the modern Russian Orthodox theologians (e.g., Solowjew, Florenski, Ilijn, Bulgakow). See on that point among others Dom Lillaline, "De debat sophiologique," in *Irenikon*, XIII (1936), 168-205.

it. Moreover, the description of these qualities in the Sapiential Books is so carried through that their application to the incarnate Wisdom as such and to Mary not only is made possible, but has become self-evident. For the description is of such a nature that it presents Wisdom, although before its incarnation, not formally in its eternal, divine being, apart from and above all relationship with the world, but as a person who has come forth from God, who stands in actual relation to the world, and who lives and works in the world apart from God and next to Him, and likewise subject to Him. It thus occupies a place which is similar to that held by the incarnate Wisdom and which also can proportionately belong to a created person.

Here again, the description presents Wisdom specifically in the form of a female person, springing from God. In virtue of her procession from God and her relationship with God, this female person assists Him as a daughter assists her father; and toward the world she exercises an influence as does a mother in the home of the father. In other words: Wisdom appears as a principle, springing from God and resembling Him, which is "seat," "vessel," and "instrument" of God in His vivifying and enlightening influence upon the world.

Furthermore, in the literal meaning of these texts Wisdom¹³ does not exclusively represent the *Sapientia genita* in the person of the Logos, but embraces also the *Sapientia spirata* in the person of the Holy Ghost under the combined idea of "Wisdom proceeding from God and poured out from God into creation," namely, to vivify and enlighten creation.

From this joining of Logos and Spirit it follows that

¹³ Especially in Ecclus., chap. 24 and Wisd., chap. 7.

here in particular the *Sapientia genita* also appears under the image of a female principle, because it is clothed in the qualities which especially belong to the Holy Spirit, the *Ruah* or *Neschamah* of God. On the other hand, the application of these texts to the incarnate Wisdom as such does not limit itself naturally to the person of Christ; but at the same time it has in view another person who stands in relationship to Christ analogous to that relationship of the Holy Ghost to the person of the Logos in the Divinity.

This description of the qualities belonging to Wisdom before its incarnation, namely, the predicates "image of God" and "first-born of creation," by whom, in whom, and for whom all things are made, maintained, and completed, is held by the apostles ¹⁴ as prototype of the glory of the *Sapientia incarnata*. Ecclesiasticus (24:3 ff.) has already drawn an analogy between the indwelling and working of Wisdom in the first completion of the visible creation—under the form of a mist which covers the earth and makes it fertile and of a heavenly source of light—and its residing and working among men—under the form of a sweet-smelling garden and a salutary well of living waters. Thus the sacred Scriptures themselves show us that we have a right to apply to Mary the entire contents of these texts and make clear the precise manner of their application.

Holy Writ gives us the right, in so far as the glory of Wisdom personified must reveal itself in its own humanity, which is united to it by hypostatic union as *sedes* and *sponsa*, and likewise in the maternal *sedes* and *sponsa Sapientiae*. It also shows us the precise manner of application. It teaches us that the glory of Wisdom belongs es-

¹⁴ Col. 1:17 ff.

pecially to its human soul, since the latter's origin from God is inseparably connected with the procession of Wisdom from God, in its realization as well as in God's eternal ordinance; and since that soul, in value and rank and especially in quality of its final end, is the beginning of all God's ways; and lastly, since in the natural creation the working of Wisdom which creates, vivifies, and enlightens, is reflected in the analogous working of the soul of Christ in the order of grace.

Finally a historical representation underlies the entire description of Wisdom in Ecclesiasticus, namely, the figure of the cloud of light, the *Schekhinah* or *Kebhod Jahweh*, in connection with the symbol of the dove descending from heaven. Symbolically it points back to the invisible habitation and operation of Wisdom in the world at the completion of creation, as much as it typically points forward to the visible and corporal appearance later in the world as incarnate Wisdom.

This symbol finds its complete, striking, and living fulfillment in the flesh of the incarnate Wisdom. It also characterizes in a marvelous manner its supernatural, spiritual, and heavenly being as "daughter of God" and "mother of the world," and embraces also in its typical and symbolic meaning, but itself and in the most natural way, the mother of Wisdom incarnate, especially since she is excellently characterized in the very Canticle of Canticles by the name "aurora" and "dove," while her own name proves it as well.

The application of these texts to Mary is very old and reaches beyond the Middle Ages to the time of the Fathers. So far as we know it is textually used only in the Latin liturgies, particularly in the Roman and Mozara-

bic.¹⁵ The Greek liturgies advocate the idea of this application with more emphasis through the very frequent use of the name ἡ Θεόπαις, the child of God, which is as typical as θεοτόκος.

In the earlier Fathers the application of the texts is but seldom found; however there is more than one indication in favor of this application to Mary in the above-mentioned manner. Among these indications belongs the concept of the ante-Nicene Fathers in particular, which was wrongly explained by the Arians. According to the view of the Fathers, Wisdom's proceeding from God, "being born" of Him, and "being created" by Him cannot be applied in an abstract manner to its substantial origin and its being by itself or in God; this can only be applied in a concrete manner to a going forth and "existence" of this Wisdom next to, apart from, and in a certain sense also under God, in the midst of God's creation, which is to be completed by Wisdom. From the outset of Christianity the position of Wisdom is thus conceived as a central place between God and creation.

According to this concept the eternal Wisdom already from the beginning of creation, notably as the "Male'akh Jahweh"¹⁶ who acts between God and man, and as the Wisdom who liturgically officiates with the people of Israel (Ecclus. 24:10), occupies a place which resembles that of the "Sapientia incarnata," typifying and introducing it and finding in the latter its most perfect expression.¹⁷ By

¹⁵ Cf. C. Passaglia, *De immaculato Deiparae semper virginis conceptu* (Romae, 1854).

¹⁶ Cf. in the Vulgate *Angelus Domini*, e.g., Gen. 16:7 ff.; 21:17 ff. See on this point Touzard, art. "Ange de Yahweh," in *Dict. de la Bible*, Suppl. (Paris, 1928), I, 242-55.

¹⁷ St. Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*, PG, X, 817 (cf. 812 ff.), characterizes her as Παῖς τοῦ Θεοῦ.

inversion of the process, the post-Nicene Fathers have especially brought the creation of Wisdom directly in connection with the origin of the incarnate Wisdom, here pronounced against the Arians. These Fathers explained this pre-historic origin by means of the eternity of the divine ordinance, on which it depends and which put it in connection with eternal Wisdom's going forth from God.¹⁸

More than one of the ante-Nicene Fathers understood by Wisdom, not Logos, but the Holy Spirit. Since several post-Nicene Fathers specifically consider the origin and position of Eve as ectype of the Holy Ghost, this holds a fortiori of the new Eve. St. John Damascene explicitly makes the application to her.¹⁹ Furthermore the symbol of Wisdom, the cloud of light, prevails with the Fathers of all ages as a lasting symbol, or rather as a typical figure, of Mary.

To throw more light upon the applicability of these texts to Mary according to these doctrines of the Fathers, we will enter a little deeper into their beautiful and significant meaning. If Wisdom were depicted here under the names of Logos and Son of God as equal to the Father and the principle of the Holy Ghost from which it is sharply distinguished, or formally in its eternal existence with the Father and in Him, with its action *ad extra* in the same manner as the Father's—that is, as first principle permitting all things to proceed from itself or calling them

¹⁸ For these views of the Fathers, see especially St. Athanasius, *Or. 3 contra Arianos* (PG, XXVI, 11–468); Cornelius a Lapide, in *Prov.* 8:23; Thomassinus, *De Trinitate*, chap. 23. For the present state of this question, cf. Lebreton, S.J., *Histoire du dogme de la Trinité, Les origines*, 6th ed., Paris, 1927.

¹⁹ See St. John Damascene, *De duabus in Christo voluntatibus*, no. 30; PG, XCV, 68.

into existence from nothingness by its authoritative utterance—the application to Mary would either be absolutely impossible or possible only in a quite artificial way.

Evidently this text does not deny this concept of the Second Person of the Deity, as the Arians claimed; on the contrary it is obviously implicit in it. But the full significance of this text would be lost if this representation would be considered as its formal meaning. The formal meaning is rather the one which the ante-Nicene Fathers have attached to these texts.

The Book of Proverbs ²⁰ does not formally present the origin of Wisdom as an internal origin from God and in His substance from all eternity, in contrast with the origin of creatures apart from God, which in time were called into being from nothingness. The origin of Wisdom is rather taken together with the origin of creatures under the combined idea of an *ad extra* procession from the power of God. It is distinguished from the origin of other beings by this, that it is first among the creatures proceeding from God, *tempore, dignitate, et causa*, and that it conditions and operates on all the others.²¹

The bringing forth of Wisdom is thus regarded as a creation or, still more clearly, as a coming forth from the spirit of Him who creates. In this sense it is characterized by the expressions *creare* (= *procreare*), *condere* (= *fundare*), *constituere*, and *parere*, which, as more often in the Old Testament, are formally used as having the same

²⁰ Prov. 8:22. Scheeben does not follow here the translation of the Vulgate: "Dominus possedit me in initio viarum suarum . . .," but the one which he himself drafts as the correct rendering of the original text, "Dominus creavit sive genuit me initium seu principium viarum suarum."

²¹ The "ways of God" are called by the Fathers *πρόοδοι*, by the theologians *processiones ex Deo*.

value. So the expression of Ecclesiasticus, "the first-born before all creatures," ²² i.e., first-born among all that by God is brought forth *ad extra*, answers to the *principium viarum Dei* from the Book of Proverbs (8:22).

It must be noted that Wisdom itself here speaks to men about itself in order to make clear to them the position it occupies toward them, and not to explain its being in an abstract way. Hence it does not wish to justify its position by its being. Wisdom explains the fact that it occupies this position by referring to a divine act which *in concreto* and *per modum unius* simultaneously established the origin and actual position of its person. So also with man: birth includes in a concrete manner both the exterior appearance and the act of being brought forth from within.

Thus the position of Wisdom answers to that of the λόγος προφορικός in contrast with the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, ²³ inasmuch as it has proceeded from God to the outside. More correctly it corresponds to the position of an aid brought forth by God from Himself and equal to Him, of a "help like unto himself," ²⁴ simile, which, by virtue of its own proceeding from God, is enabled and called to apply the influence of the Creator to the forming and ordering of the world; likewise to impart to all things, through the power given to it by the Creator, that perfection of being and life which the decree of creation ordained for them.

Wisdom thus occupies a central place between God and creation in which it appears as existing and working out-

²² Eccclus. 24:5. Cf. Col. 1:15.

²³ By applying to God certain Stoical terms for the human psyche, many early Greek Fathers distinguish the internal word (Λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, *Verbum insitum*) from the Word spoken to the outside in creation (Λόγος προφορικός, *Verbum prolaticium*).

²⁴ Gen. 2:18.

side God, not haphazardly, e.g., under the name of the Son of God sent *ad extra*, but in a most particular way, similar to the essential characteristics and working of a mother. It is like a mother, who in the fulfillment of her task, the arrangement of her household, the care and government of the inmates, and above all the care of the children, acts as the main figure of the family and becomes a child with and among her children. In such a position Wisdom, too, with regard to its origin, ought to be thought of not as "son" but as "child," more correctly, as "daughter of God." In this quality it is indeed represented here in a beautiful way, and rightly so, for its affectionate habitation and association with men comes forward as the continuation and crowning of that action by which with God it constructed the cosmos in the beginning and continually rules and governs it, "playing before Him,"²⁵ i.e., lightly and lovingly.

This train of thought is more deeply and richly extended in Ecclesiasticus, where the origin of Wisdom is described as something appearing *ad extra* from the mouth of God,²⁶ not in the form of words but as aspiration, namely, the breathing out or pouring forth of the breath of God *ad extra*. The procession *ad extra* here assumes the character of inspiration and infusion into an outside subject. The full meaning must be understood in accordance with the representation of the entire chapter and in consideration of Wisd. 7:25 f. also as a pouring out of "vapor" and "fragrance," and of "water" and "oil," and of "brightness" and "light." Here one thinks instinctively of the pouring out of the *vapor virtutis* and *splendor lucis*

²⁵ Prov. 8:30.

²⁶ Ecclus. 24:5.

aeternae; for, by an allusion to Genesis,²⁷ Wisdom at once becomes active in the visible world as an inexhaustible source of light from heaven and as a mist which covers the earth and makes it fertile.

Consequently under this double form Wisdom was represented in the light-giving cloud (*Schekhinah*) in which, as in its tabernacle, it established itself among the people of Israel as *Maleakh Jahweh*.²⁸ As it had lived and worked in the world from the beginning, so henceforth it would live and work there forever, as a priest in "the holy dwelling" and as a king on mount Sion.²⁹ The *Schekhinah*, it is true, is not explicitly mentioned in this text, but the context makes possible the allusion to it, even demands it. This figure brings us particularly to the contents of the following verses and defines their meaning as follows: through its planting and establishment among the people of God, analogous to the implanting of the soul in the body, Wisdom has made for itself on the earth a fragrant Paradise and a spring of living waters, just as, at the time of creation, floating over the earth as a mist, which drenched the entire face of the earth, it covered the earth with plants and poured out, as the breath of God, the sunlight over the earth.

So Wisdom very significantly appears in this figure as a spiritual being which, by virtue of its proceeding from God, is related to Him by nature and resembles Him. Likewise it is at the same time image and likeness, the abode of God and His instrument in vivifying and enlightening the world and making it fertile. Toward the world, Wisdom acts as a heavenly principle of life and light

²⁷ Gen. 1:3; 2:6.

²⁸ Exod. 40:32-36; cf. 13:21 and 14:19 f.

²⁹ Eccles. 24:14 ff.

poured out over it by God and from God. In this way the position of Wisdom in relation to God as "daughter" and to the world as "mother" is elucidated in the most beautiful manner. This is especially shown when we consider that to the figure of the "cloud of light" answers also that of the dove of light, which proceeds from God and moves between God and the earth. Attention must likewise be given to Gen. 1:2, where the *Ruah Elohim* sat brooding over the waters as principle of light and life, and also to the resemblance between the two revelations of the Blessed Trinity at the river Jordan and on Mount Thabor.³⁰

Both symbolic representations, taken together, again reflect the metaphysical analogy of the central position of Wisdom between God as its principle and the world as the sphere of its activity, namely, the analogous place of the soul, *Nephesch*, more correctly, of the spirit-soul, *Neschamah*, in man. In its function as the life-giving principle of the body, i.e., its spiritual essence by itself, the soul stands in relation to the spirit as a force which arises from it, or as a breath which spreads itself from it over the body, and is its daughter; in relation to the body, however, it is, as the immanent principle of its formation and life, its mother.³¹

³⁰ For the dove at Jesus' baptism, see Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32. It is not clear to us how Scheeben can see in that a "dove of light"; perhaps because in the narrative of the transfiguration there is mentioned a "light-giving cloud" from which the same words rang out as at the baptism: "This is My beloved Son" (Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:6; Luke 9:34 f.).

³¹ The fact that this analogy, which completely corresponds to the spirit of the Sacred Scriptures, was wrongly used or understood in the teachings of the pagan philosophers about the world soul, is no reason to deny or ignore its profound truth. Even in the wrong form, such as is found in the Pythagorean and Platonic, the world soul still reflects the sublime doctrine of the holy philosophy of Wisdom, and it is the best, the most beautiful and fruitful, product which both mentioned schools delivered.

In reality the soul in man, to which the figure of the cloud of light splendidly applies in this quality,³² is also in a very special manner an effect and reflection of the efficacious indwelling of the Wisdom of God in the world. It is effected, in contrast with all other created principles of life, in an unusual way, through the breathing in of the breath of God. It is in its own way breath of God, and in that respect, as daughter of God, it is queen in relation to the world.

It is self-evident that this description from Ecclesiasticus, chap. 24, and from the Book of Wisdom, chap. 7, is principally applicable in form to the Holy Ghost as it reflects His qualities, even as the texts from the Book of Proverbs, chap. 8, are applicable to the Logos. However, the Logos is not thereby excluded. On the contrary, He is the immediate subject of it, but in such a way that He acts in the form of the Holy Ghost, both with regard to His inner origin from and in God through mere emanation, and with regard to His proceeding from God, effected by the Holy Ghost.³³ In this effusion the Holy Ghost is also poured forth and the Logos appears with the Holy Ghost as a force of life and light which pours out from God. Hence what is said of Wisdom in chap. 24 of Ecclesiasticus refers in the virtual or typical application to the incarnate Wisdom, directly indeed to Christ, but indirectly also to Mary, the living *sedes* and *sponsa* of Wisdom.

THE PROTOTYPES OF MARY

Finally, a great number of prototypes were taken from the Old Testament to illustrate this doctrine. These pro-

³² Only the non-spiritual principles of life correspond to the cloud.

³³ Eccclus. 1:9 f.: *Ipse creavit illam in Spiritu sancto . . . et effudit illam super omnia opera sua.*

totypes, almost in their entirety, are found in the Fathers from the fourth century on, and have since then remained in common and lasting use. In general they possess the particular value of holy symbols, and as such they have the significance of a witness for those who attach to them a relationship to Mary. If we presuppose the common preparatory character of the divine dispensations and revelations in the Old Testament, the most important ones can be more or less considered as proper "types," i.e., prototypes willed by the Holy Ghost Himself. As such they can be recognized, partly by their clear likeness to their counterpart. The most genuine in this respect and at the same time the most significant are: Eve and Paradise, the ark of Noe and the dove with the branch of an olive tree, the burning bush and Gedeon's fleece, the ark of the covenant and the throne of Solomon, and lastly, Esther and Judith.³⁴

The symbolism of Eve has been used in a theological sense since Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. It follows from the protevangelium, compared with Rom. 5:14 f., where Adam is represented as a prototype of Christ. Like Adam, Eve also is a prototype: partly as a positive and immediate figure in her unity and association with Adam and in the privileges belonging to herself before the Fall, in her supernatural purity and virginity, as well as after her fall, in her position as "mother of all the living,"³⁵ or as one who communicates natural life to all mankind; partly also as a negative and contrary figure in her fall with its pernicious results.

³⁴ See a choice of these prototypes in the bull *Ineffabilis* (Dec. 8, 1854). Most of them are collected by Theodore Studita, *Or. 2 de nativ. virg.* (under the works of John Damascene), *PG*, XCVI, 680-97. The patristic material is collected by Passaglia, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, sec. 3.

³⁵ Gen. 3:20.

Taking into consideration that the new Adam as seed of the woman (cf. Gen. 3:15) had to be formed of the woman, dwell in the woman, and be born of her, the Fathers complete the figure of Eve with the one of the earth not yet desecrated and cursed, of which the first Adam was formed by God Himself; or also with the figure of Paradise, planted by God and designated to Adam as his dwelling-place.³⁶ Moreover, since the new Adam, in contrast with the first Adam, was prefigured by the tree of life or by its fruit, we find Mary represented by the earth of Paradise. According to Genesis the earth had then not yet been made fertile by rain and human labor, or even by natural seeds, but only by the mist of the primordial waters. In this earth Christ had to be planted by God as the tree of life. And in this tree we also find Mary represented, so far as she was to bear Christ as the life-giving fruit.

The use of the symbol of the newly created earth, subjected only to the hand and breath of God, out of which was formed Adam, or the tree of life, is in tradition as early as the symbolism of Eve. In addition to the *epistola presbyterorum Achaiae*, it is found in Irenaeus and Tertullian and quite frequently in later writers.³⁷ As heavenly principle of the celestial life of mankind, Christ is also represented in the first creation by the sun as the source of light. Mary is likewise represented by the light of the aurora, which precedes the appearance of the sun; and also by the moon, as the second light in the heavens, which receives

³⁶ Cf. Passaglia, *op. cit.*, sec. 3, chap. 4, art. 1 and 2.

³⁷ An account of the martyrdom of the Apostle St. Andrew which originally was probably written in Latin and which did not exist before the year 400. Text in PG, II, 1217-48.

its light from the sun; and finally by heaven itself as the abode of the sun.³⁸

As the counterpart of sinful Eve, Mary, the instrument of the redeeming victory over the enemies of God, is clearly represented by the women of the Old Testament who at various times had an important part in the delivery of Israel—more especially by Esther and Judith; for all victories over the temporal enemies of the people of God represent the spiritual victory of Christ. These illustrious, victorious women, who were instrumental in the saving of God's people, have a special relationship to Mary, who by prophecy was to be partner of Christ in battle and in victory. Indeed the most significant allusions to the privileges of Mary are found in both these figures, which mutually supplement each other.

In agreement with the part Mary played in the salvation of mankind, the symbolic meaning of the Noe's ark presents itself in a natural way, inasmuch as it floated on the waves of the Deluge and saved the people who were in it, and again as it released the seeds from its bosom for the repopulation of the world. Likewise in the symbol of the dove with the branch of an olive tree, which announced to the people who had escaped from the Deluge the deliverance of the earth from the curse of sin and its renewed blessing, the seed of the woman mentioned in the protevangelium seems to be very significantly represented as the *filius olei*³⁹ as symbol of the offspring of God which had to be given to the world by the virgin mother.

³⁸ See Passaglia, *op. cit.*, art. 3.

³⁹ It alludes probably to Isa. 5:1: *Vinea facta est dilecto meo in cornu filio olei*. The original text, however, means: "My beloved had a vineyard on a hill in a fruitful place." Cf. A. Van Hoonacker, *Het boek Isaias*, 1932, p. 57.

The symbolism of Noe's ark brings us to the symbolism of the ark of the covenant. The latter is apparently as much a prototype of Mary as of the humanity of Christ, both with regard to her unique union with God and to her position between God and man, which arises from it.

According to the Fathers this union with God is pre-figured in the ark of the covenant as the throne of God, through its being enveloped by the "glory of the Lord," through its containing the tables of the law and the manna as figures of divine truth and grace, just as the staff of Aaron is a figure of the priesthood. To Mary's perfect virginity and fullness of grace they likewise apply the building of the ark of the covenant, which, in keeping with its dignity, was made from imperishable wood and was plated with gold inside and out. They also frequently consider the golden cover of the ark, the propitiatory (throne of grace), directly as a prototype of Mary, although it is rather a prototype of Christ.

Even more impressive with regard to Mary are the symbols of the golden vessel which was kept in the ark, and of the holy of holies, in which the ark itself stood, or the figure of the Tabernacle as the holy dwelling or royal palace of God or as "tabernacle of the testimony." We should note also the symbols of the holy utensils and vessels used in the Temple, particularly those in the holy of holies, but especially the golden altar of incense, the seven-branched candlestick, and the table of proposition. In these figures Christ is considered as the real contents of the vessels or the object placed on them, which are filled with the fire, light, and life of the Divinity; namely, as the spiritual offering of incense or the burning coals, as the

lamp of eternal light and the bread of eternal life.⁴⁰ With these figures is also associated that of the "gate that looked to the east," described in the Ezechiel's vision of the Temple, by which the glory of the Lord entered the Temple and which, for that reason, had to remain closed to all men.⁴¹

In connection with the ark of the covenant and the Tabernacle as a place of meeting, the symbolism of the ancient signs or means by which God came to men follows of itself. We should note especially Jacob's ladder touching heaven, and the words: "Quam terribilis est locus iste; vere non est hic aliud nisi domus Dei et porta coeli";⁴² the "holy ground," where God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and also the bush itself;⁴³ lastly the "holy mountains," those of the south: Sinai, Seir, and Pharan, on which God revealed Himself to the entire people,⁴⁴ as well as the "mountain of the Lord" at Jerusalem, that is, Sion, which at the same time is the symbol of heaven as the throne of God.⁴⁵ Related to the symbols of the sanctuary are those of the royal glory of David and Solomon, especially the throne of Solomon, made entirely of gold and ivory.⁴⁶

Through a striking resemblance the familiar types connected with miraculous occurrences are justified; namely, the blossoming staff of Aaron, Gedeon's fleece bathed in heavenly dew, and the "little cloud" which Elias saw rise

⁴⁰ Cf. Passaglia, *op. cit.*, chap. 2, art. 1 et 2.

⁴¹ Ezech. 43:1-4; 44:1-3.

⁴² Gen. 28:17.

⁴³ Exod. 3:2.

⁴⁴ Deut. 33:2; Hab. 3:3.

⁴⁵ Cf. Ps. 67; Isa. 2:2; St. Gregory the Great, in *I Kings*, I, no. 5; *PL*, LXXIX, 25.

⁴⁶ III Kings 10:18 ff.

out of the sea "like a man's foot" and from which the desired rain fell.⁴⁷ The typical character of several other common symbols lies deeper. With them belong the stone tables of the law, the sealed book in Isaias, the sundial of Ezechias, the cloud of light ⁴⁸ that guided the Israelites into the Promised Land.

⁴⁷ Num. 17:7 ff.; Judg. 6:37 ff.; III Kings 18:44 (cf. *Brev. Rom.*, July 16, 2nd noct., lect. 4).

⁴⁸ Cf. H. Marracci, *Polyanthea Mariana*, s.v. "nubecula" and "nubes"; ed. Bourassé, *Summa Aurea*, Vol. X (Paris, 1862), sec. 24-34.

CHAPTER III

Mary in Tradition

WITH regard to the qualities and position of Mary, the tradition of the Church so closely follows the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures that whatever is of a dogmatic nature and fundamental significance in tradition, and whatever belongs to the proper doctrinal tradition, can be regarded as a further development of scriptural doctrine. In other words, this tradition unfolds from the doctrine of Sacred Scripture, either exegetically or through theological conclusions, that is, with the aid of the idea of Mary's perpetual and perfect virginity, which the Church has always expressed in the Apostles' Creed: "natus ex Maria Virgine."

Three important facts from the life of Mary have such a relation to the doctrine of Sacred Scripture: her Immaculate Conception, her freedom from all personal sin, and her preservation from corruption or the assumption of her body into heaven. Concerning these the Sacred Scriptures do not say anything explicit, and for that very reason these points have later become, to a greater or less extent, the object of controversies. For these are not mere facts which, as analogous to events in the lives of other saints, can be known only through definite and explicit mention; they are truths of fundamental significance, which for that reason are contained in the Creed and are implied in Sacred Scripture when it speaks of Mary's dig-

nity, position, and wealth of grace. With regard to the Immaculate Conception and Mary's preservation from all sin, this doctrinal development is acknowledged; but with regard to Mary's assumption it is still often overlooked.

Whatever, besides these three truths, is handed down apart from Sacred Scripture, concerning further details of Mary's early life and death, does not belong to the doctrinal tradition of the Church and is in general very uncertain. From earliest times the Apostolic See has taken a stand to reject detailed information of this sort, which claims to be a historical supplement to the facts we know concerning Mary. On the other hand, many Greek Fathers of the Church and, since the Middle Ages, also many Latin theologians admitted much of the contents of these narratives to be historically reliable.¹

Books bearing the names of several apostles and purporting to give detailed information about the early life of Mary, and also the book ascribed to St. Melito of Sardis relating to the end of her life,² were declared not only unreliable, but objectionable, both by Pope Innocent I and by Pope Gelasius.³ After enumerating the canonical books, Innocent I says: "However, the rest, which have been written under the name of Matthew or James the Less . . . or under the name of Thomas, . . . must be not merely rejected, but even condemned." Gelasius:

¹ The attitude of the Fathers and theologians toward the Marian apocrypha has been thoroughly examined. The conclusion may be drawn that no historical value can be ascribed to the facts related in these books, unless these facts are confirmed by trustworthy testimonies apart from the influence of the apocrypha.

² *De transitu B.M. Virginis*, PG, V, 1231-40.

³ Innocent I, *Epist. ad Exuperium*, no. 7; PL, XX, 502. The so-called *Decretum Gelasianum* (PL, LIX, 175 ff.) is certainly not from Pope Gelasius; it was compiled by an unknown person, probably in the sixth century; it was confirmed by Pope Leo IX and included in the *Corpus Juris* of Gratian.

“The Catholic and Apostolic Church does not at all accept the rest, which have been written either by heretics or by schismatics. A few of these, which come to our mind and must be avoided by Catholics, we believe to be spurious.” After that follow, among others, the collection of Gospels or narratives concerning the early life of Mary and the book *De transitu*.

Although the Greeks frequently used these legends in their liturgy, the Latin liturgy has taken only one event from the early life of Mary, the presentation of Mary in the Temple. Here the object of the feast is less the outward ceremony than its significance, that is, Mary’s complete dedication to God at an early age, which can be concluded from the Gospel narratives and from the very nature of the event. The fact has nothing incredible about it, and it is not at all necessary that the tradition regarding it be based on the *protoevangelium Jacobi*.

For lack of reliable historical sources, the writing of a life of Mary embracing the periods before and after the earthly life of her divine Son is an impossible task. It has often been tried in the past. Trombelli’s volumes form the best strictly critical work of this kind. But the results in most cases must be called merely conjectural history.⁴

In all such instances and also in devotional writings we should always point out the legendary character of the “traditions” referred to. The expression “tradition tells us” should be avoided lest someone confuse mere historical traditions and the dogmatic. We should avoid giving the impression that tradition, embracing facts outside the

⁴ J. C. Trombelli, *Mariae sanctissimae vita ac gesta*, Bononiae, 1761, reprinted in Bourassé, *Summa Aurea*, Vols. I and II. In Vol. II is also reprinted De Castro, *Historia Deiparae V. Mariae* (exceptionally uncritical).

frame of the Gospel narratives, has no better support than these legendary sources. Likewise we should refrain from presenting as historically probable matter which beforehand appears fabulous, by introducing this or that testimony, disregarding whether it is true or fictitious.

As for the development of Mariology in tradition, the person of Mary quite naturally remains more in the background during the first four centuries in both the doctrine and the worship of the Church.⁵ Yet significant allusions to her position, in particular to her share in the work of redemption, are by no means wanting. In the controversies of that period about the natures in Christ, the person of Mary came to be more particularly considered. Mary as Virgin Mother pointed on the one hand to the godhead, on the other to the true humanity of Christ. In the fourth century the perfect and perpetual virginity of Mary was explicitly declared to be a privilege demanded by the godhead of her Son and as such was defended against heretics. The perfect holiness of her interior life was likewise upheld.

Finally in the fifth century Mary's true greatness is fully recognized in the fight against Nestorius regarding the way Christ is composed. The divine motherhood was considered as a criterion of the hypostatic union in Christ. The definition of the hypostatic union of the human nature of Christ to the Logos was understood to glorify the person of Mary, as against the doctrine of the Arians; and the definition of the divine sonship of the Logos placed the person of Christ in His full glory. In the definition of the hypostatic union, the humanity of Christ was presented as lacking its own personality, but the divine per-

⁵ Cf. E. Neubert, *Marie dans l'Eglise anténicéenne*, Paris, 1908.

son of Christ as communicating, or hiding, His eternal, personal glory, not as receiving the same. In these definitions Mary, not Christ, stepped into the light as the person glorified through this privilege.

Thus it is true and significant that the first three general synods of the Church have glorified in a natural succession the honor of the Son of God, of the Spirit of God, and of the Mother of God,⁶ the honor of the two divine persons, who proceed from God, and of the created person who is taken up by God in the closest union and who appears in the Apostles' Creed as third next to both of these, united with them in a wonderful alliance.

Since the Council of Ephesus Mary appears in the doctrine and public worship of the Church in full splendor as the *mulier amicta sole*. As she was celebrated in public worship by a series of feasts, these again brought about a thorough discussion of her privileges, until in the twelfth century such festive sermons particularly represent the development of tradition. From then on, in addition to an unlimited number of edifying writings, a more thorough, scientific, dogmatic, and theological treatment of Mariology was developed.

This scientific treatment had as its first aim the question of the sanctification of the person of Mary,⁷ as befitting the dignity and position of the Mother of God. It focused on the question whether this sanctification of Mary, as that of Christ, coincides with the first moment of her existence and henceforth preserves her from all stain of sin. Through the decision of this question by the Apostolic

⁶ Council of Nicaea (325), Council of Constantinople (381), and Council of Ephesus (431).

⁷ Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, IIIa, q. 27.

See, the foundation of Mariology has been firmly established. The bull *Ineffabilis Deus* of Pius IX, which is rich in its contents and refers to this dogma, sets forth the entire concept of the Church regarding Mary through the explanation of this one point.

The most ancient noteworthy allusions to Mary's sublime position are found in the writings of Ignatius of Antioch and in the *Epistola ad Diognetum*, in which Mary is brought into prominence in the Christian Church. St. Ignatius declares:

Our God, Jesus Christ, was conceived in the womb by Mary according to God's dispensation, of the seed of David, but by the Holy Ghost. He was born and baptized that by His Passion He might purify the water. Mary's virginity was hidden from the prince of this world, as was also her offspring and likewise the death of the Lord: three famous mysteries which were wrought by God in silence.⁸

The closing words of the *Epistola ad Diognetum* read thus:

Bearing this tree of the true Word inwardly received and displaying its fruit, you shall always reap those things that are desired by God, which the serpent cannot reach and which deception does not approach. And Eve is not then corrupted, but is trusted as a virgin; salvation is manifested; and the apostles are filled with wisdom; and the pasch of the Lord approaches. The choirs are gathered together and arranged in proper order, and the Word rejoices in teaching the saints, by whom the Father is glorified.⁹

Henceforth such a contrast between Eve and Mary is often found, even before the Council of Ephesus, but still more frequently after it.

⁸ St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epist. ad Ephesios*, PG, V, 659.

⁹ *Epistola ad Diognetum*, PG, II, 1185.

During the first four centuries the relative obscurity in which Mary remained caused a positively misleading picture to be drawn of her, sometimes even by significant Fathers, through a misunderstanding of some of the biblical texts, notably with regard to her moral perfection. After the Council of Ephesus every trace of such stains disappears.

CHAPTER IV

Literature about Mary

A COMPLETE collection of Mariological literature has been made by Marraci, *Bibliotheca Mariana* (1648), and Roskovany, *Beata Maria Virgo in sua conceptione immaculata* (1873-81). However, Parts I and III of the latter work have embodied the more ancient writings without any critical discrimination. There is also an encyclopedic work of Marraci, *Polyanthea Mariana*, in which the titles and dignities of Mary are alphabetically arranged together with abundant texts relating to each, taken from the Fathers and the writers of the Middle Ages; this is to be found in volumes IX and X of the *Summa aurea de laudibus Beatae Virginis*, which is likewise a sort of Mariological encyclopedia in thirteen volumes, containing the best works on Mary. Unfortunately the judgment of the editor of the later edition is not always correct.¹ The work of Dr. von Lehner, in spite of some theological oversights, is a highly valued account of Mariology prior to the Council of Ephesus, from the viewpoint of the history of the dogma of Mary's divine motherhood. Most of the Fathers' material on this subject, with a few exceptions also critically discriminated, is collected and arranged in Passaglia's *De immaculato deiparae semper virginis conceptu* (3 vols., 1854).

¹ Compiled by J. Bourassé; ed., Migne. The work was published in Paris, 1862-66.

As in some of the more ancient works, so also in almost all Mariological writings of the present time, even in those which are regarded as having scientific value, some texts from the Fathers are indiscriminately quoted. Sometimes under the names of highly esteemed Fathers of early times, writings are cited of which some undoubtedly, others at least probably, belong to a later period; whereas the genuine writings are richer and more beautiful sources.

Indeed some of these documents are, through their age and contents, so valuable that they cannot be completely neglected; but they must be presented in their real character. In general it is certain or at least more probable that a later origin is to be accepted for all the sermons for special feast days of the Blessed Virgin bearing a date earlier than the fifth century, for these feasts came into existence only later. This is unquestionably true for the feasts of the Nativity and Assumption. On the other hand, the argument that the feasts of the Annunciation (or the Incarnation) and of the Purification or the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple—usually called *occursus*, i.e., “meeting” (with Simeon and Anna)—cannot otherwise be traced to that time, is not convincing proof for the later origin of the sermons in question, especially when the title alone and not the text itself points to the special feast. Many Christmas sermons dating from that time are formal sermons on Mary, and it is probable that on some days of the festive seasons of Christmas and Epiphany attention was directed to the mysteries connected with the Christ’s nativity and manifestation, as, for example, the mystery of the annunciation and others mentioned in Sacred Scripture. As a consequence of the special consideration given

these mysteries, an honorable place was ascribed to the mother of Christ.

Thus the excellent sermon *De hypapante* can still be credited to St. Methodius of the third century, as is stated in the text.² On the other hand, the origin of the homilies of Gregory Thaumaturgus *De annuntiatione*³ is very doubtful, as are the homilies of Gregory of Nyssa, Amphilo-chius,⁴ Eusebius Emesenus,⁵ Athanasius, and Epiphanius.⁶ All the homilies on Mary under the name of St. John Chrysostom,⁷ and also the sermons and letters *De nativitate* and *De assumptione* which are ascribed to St. Jerome⁸ and St. Augustine⁹ are undoubtedly spurious and

² PG, XVIII, 348-81. For the following annotations of Scheeben, see J. de Ghellinck, "Une programme de lectures patristiques" in *Nouv. rev. theol.*, 1933, pp. 434-36, assimilated in Bittremieux, *Marialia*, 1936, pp. 13-16.

³ There are three of them in PG, X, 1145-77. Cf. M. Jugie, "Les homélies Mariales attribuées à S. Grégoire le Thaumaturge" in *Anal. Boll.*, 1925, pp. 86-95.

⁴ Pseudo-Gregorius Nyssenus, *De occursu Domini*, PG, XLVI, 1151-81; Amphilo-chius, PG, XXXIX, 44-60.

⁵ Under the name of Eusebius Emesenus a series of 145 homilies came into circulation, edited for the first time by Fremy (Paris, 1554). They are taken from the Gospel commentary of St. Bruno of Asti (1045-1123).

⁶ Pseudo-Athanasius, *Sermo in occ. Dom.*, PG, XXVIII, 973-1000; Pseudo-Epiphanius, *De laudibus B.M.*, PG, XLIII, 485-501; a Coptic sermon on the Blessed Virgin by Epiphanius was published by Budge, *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts*, London, 1915, pp. 120-38; English translation, pp. 699-725.

⁷ Pseudo-Chrysostom, *In annuntiationem*, PG, L, 791-96; *In occursum*, L, 807-12.

⁸ Pseudo-Jerome, *De nativitate Mariae* (as epist. 50 in the appendix of the letters of St. Jerome), PL, XXX, 308-15. It is a free compilation of Pseudo-Matthew, *De ortu beatae Mariae*, made by Paschasius Radbertus. Cf. D. C. Lambot, "L'homélie du Pseudo-Jérôme sur l'Assomption et l'Evangile de la nativité de Marie d'après une lettre inédite d'Hincmar" in *Rev. Bénédict.*, XLVI (1934), 265-82; *De assumptione* (epist. 9 ad Paulam et Eustochium, beginning with the words, *Cogitis me*), PL, XXX, 122-47.

⁹ Pseudo-Augustine, *De assumptione B.V.M.*, PL, XL, 1141-48 (by an unknown writer, probably directed against the Pseudo-Jerome letter *Cogitis me* of Radbertus). By Pseudo-Augustine, *De nativitate B.V.M.*, Scheeben perhaps means *Serm. App.* 194 (PL, XXXIX, 2104-7), which appears in the breviary on September 8 in the second nocturn. It is from Ambrosius Autpertus (PL, LXXXIX, 1275 ff.). Cf. Dom G. Morin, "Les leçons apocryphes du bréviaire romain" in *Rev. Bénédict.*, VIII (1891), 278.

of a much later date, being either compilations in part or deliberate forgeries.

But a great deal of reference to Mary is found in the Christmas sermons,—both the Theophania and Epiphania sermons—especially in those of Ephraem of Syria,¹⁰ Theodotus of Ancyra, which was read out in the Council of Ephesus,¹¹ and of Augustine.¹² However, some of the Christmas sermons attributed to St. Augustine are not genuine. The first of the famous homilies of St. Proclus, who as disciple and friend of St. Jerome may be said to represent his point of view, appears to have been given at Ephesus in the presence of Nestorius on the “feast of the Virgin.”¹³ Of the homilies ascribed to Proclus, the sixth at least is certainly spurious on account of its partial lack of taste. Many beautiful passages concerning Mary can be found at other places in the works of Augustine, Jerome, and Ambrose, e.g., in their writings about virginity.¹⁴

For a long time after the Council of Ephesus the liter-

¹⁰ Regarding St. Ephraem of Syria (ed. Assemani, Rome, 1732–46; Lamy, Malines, 1882–1902), it is not settled how much of this is for certain authentic. See De Ghellinck, *op. cit.*, p. 435.

¹¹ Theodotus of Ancyra, *Hom.* 1 and 2 in *die nativitatis Domini*, PG, LXXVII, 1349–85. See also *Hom.* 3 *contra Nestorium*, *ibid.*, 1385–89; *Hom.* 4 in *Deiparam et Sineonem*, *ibid.*, 1389–1412.

¹² Here Scheeben refers to St. Augustine, *Sermones de natali Domini* (serm. 184–96). G. Morin gives still another: *S. Augustini sermones post Maurinos reperti*, in *Miscellanea Augustiniana* (Rome, 1930), I, 209–11.

¹³ St. Proclus of Constantinople, *Laudatio in ss. Dei Genitricem Mariam*, PG, LXV, 680–92, is not genuine according to some theologians. It is the first of the twenty-five sermons given in Migne; the fifth one is also about Mary (*ibid.*, 716–21).

¹⁴ St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, chaps., 2–7; PL, XL, 397–400; St. Jerome, *De perpetua virginitate B. Mariae adversus Helvidium*; PL, XXIII, 183–206; *Adversus Jovinianum*; *ibid.*, 211–338; St. Ambrose, *De virginibus*, PL, XVI, 187–232 (especially Bk. II, chap. 2, sec. 208–11); *De institutione virginis et S. Mariae virginitate perpetua*, PL, XVI, 305–34; *Exhortatio virginitatis*, chap. 5, nos. 31–33; *ibid.*, 345.

ature becomes much richer, especially the Greek literature, partly because in the East the number of feast days of Mary increased at that time, e.g., with the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and of the Presentation. Of foremost excellence are the sermons of Hesychius, Modestus, and Sophronius, all of Jerusalem;¹⁵ Andrew of Crete, John Damascene,¹⁶ Germanus of Constantinople, and Theodore Studita.¹⁷ The Latin literature grew richer only in the eleventh century. The sermons on Mary ascribed to St. Ildefonse are of a much later date; only one, *De perpetua virginitate Beatae Mariae*, is genuine, but in every respect it is an important document.¹⁸

In the eleventh century Fulbert of Chartres, who investigates legends of Mary, and Peter Damian, who is important for his dogmatic depth and the loftiness of his ideas, excel as preachers of Mary.¹⁹ Then follows St. An-

¹⁵ Hesychius, *De S. Maria Deipara homiliae duae*, PG, XCIII, 1453-68; *In praesentatione Domini*, *ibid.*, 1468-78; Modestus, *In occursum*, PG, LXXXVI (II), 3276 ff.; *In dormitionem*, *ibid.*, 3277-3312; Sophronius, *In annuntiationem*, PG, LXXXVII (III), 3217-88; *De hypapante*, *ibid.*, 3287-3302.

¹⁶ St. Andrew of Crete, *In diem natalem ss. Deiparae orationes quatuor*, PG, XCVII, 805-81; *In annunt.*, *ibid.*, 881, 913; *In dormitionem or. tres*, *ibid.*, 700-61. Of this last one alone the authenticity is certain (De Ghellinck, *op. cit.*, p. 436). See also C. Chevalier, *La Mariologie de S. Jean Damascène*, Rome, 1936.

¹⁷ St. Germanus, *In praesent. B. Mariae puellae biennis hom. duae*, PG, XCVIII, 292-320; *In annunt.*, *ibid.*, 320-40; *In dormitionem or. tres*, *ibid.*, 340-72; *In S. Mariae zonam*, *ibid.*, 372-84; St. Theodore Studita, *In ss. Deiparae obitum*, PG, XCIX, 539 ff.; *In annunt. serm. duo*, *ibid.*, 592-97; *In dormitionem*, *ibid.*, 720-29. It may have been owing to distraction that Scheeben does not mention under the Greek Fathers St. Cyril of Alexandria, the great champion of the dogma of Ephesus. One must especially read his *Homiliae Ephesi habitae*, particularly the fourth one (PG, LXXVII, 991-96).

¹⁸ St. Ildefonsus Toletanus, *De perpetua virginitate Mariae*, PL, LIII, 110.

¹⁹ St. Fulbert of Chartres, *Serm. de purificatione*, PL, CXLI, 319; *De natiuitate B. M.*, *ibid.*, 320-25; *De ortu B.M.*, *ibid.*, 325-31; *De annuntiatione*, *ibid.*, 336-40; St. Peter Damian, *In nativ. B.V.M. serm. duo*, PL, CXLIV, 740-61. The other Marian sermons printed there are from Nicholas of Clairvaux, as a note of Bassanus remarks, sec. 505 ff.).

selm with his *Orationes ad Beatam Virginem*,²⁰ some of which develop into grand and profound panegyrics. Among the other works ascribed to him is the beautiful little book *De excellentia Beatae Virginis*, by his disciple Eadmer, and also the opusculum *De conceptione Beatae Virginis*.²¹

The pre-scholastic Mariology reached its height in St. Bernard of Clairvaux.²² These works remain classics for all time, because they are always accurate and thorough as well as vivacious in sentiment and language. He is joined by his disciple St. Amadeus, bishop of Lausanne, by Gueric, abbot of Igny, and Arnold, abbot of Bonneval, and by the unknown writer of the beautiful *Sermones super Salve Regina*, which are wrongly ascribed by many to Bernard of Toledo, who lived before St. Bernard.²³

At the beginning of Scholasticism, St. Albert the Great

²⁰ St. Anselm of Canterbury, *Orationes (ad beat. Virg.)*, PL, CLVIII, 942-66. Those which are genuine were published in a French translation by D. A. Castel, *Méditations et prières de S. Anselme*, Maredsous, 1923; see also D. A. Wilmart, *Auteurs spirituels et textes dévots du moyen-âge latin* (Paris, 1932), pp. 162-72.

²¹ Eadmer, *De excellentia B.M. Virginis*, PL, CLIX, 557-80. It is now definitely certain that the *Tractatus de conceptione sanctae Mariae* (*ibid.*, 301-18) is also from Eadmer. Cf. H. Thurston and T. Slater, in the foreword to their critical edition of this treatise (Fribourg, 1904).

²² St. Bernard, *Super "Missus est" hom. quatuor*, PL, CLXXXIII, 55-88; *Serm. Dom. infra Oct. Ass. de duodecim praerogativis B.V.M.*, *ibid.*, 429-38; *Serm. in nativ. B.V.M. de aquaeductu*, *ibid.*, 437-48. There has been much written about the Mariology of St. Bernard. See A. Raugel, *La doctrine Mariale de S. Bernard*, Paris, 1935. A concise compilation of the Marian sermons of St. Bernard is offered by Hurter, *Opuscula selecta Patrum*, Vol. XII (Innsbruck, 1894).

²³ Amadeus of Lausanne, *De Maria virginea Matre hom. octo*, PL, CLXXXVIII, 1303-46; Gueric, *In festo Purificat., serm. sex*, *ibid.*, 187 ff.; *In nativ. B.M. serm. duo*, *ibid.*, CLXXXV, 199 ff. (cf. D. De Wilde, *De beato Guericco abbate Igniacensi eiusque doctrina de formatione Christi in nobis*, Westmalle, 1935); Arnold of Bonneval, *De laudibus B.M.V.*, PL, CLXXXIX, 1725-34; *De cardinalibus operibus Christi*, cap. I; *De nativitate Christi*, *ibid.*, 1616-21; *De septem verbis Christi in cruce*, tract. III; *De verbo "Mulier, ecce filius tuus"*, *ibid.*, 1693-98; Anonymous, *In antiphonam "Salve Regina" serm. quatuor*, PL, CLXXXIV, 1059-78.

carried out a thorough, scientific study of the Mariological question, complete to the smallest detail, which excels in originality, depth, and wealth of thought.²⁴ Yet he often allows himself the liberty of a mere edifying representation, often unites the pro and the contra, and inserts many superfluous details. The contemporary work, *De laudibus Beatae Virginis*, of Richard of St. Lawrence, which is sometimes ascribed to Albert and has been printed among his works,²⁵ gathers all conceivable features, figures, and symbols, systematically grouped, to describe the glory of Mary. St. Thomas has thoroughly dealt with the Mariological questions²⁶ as also has St. Bonaventure in the *Speculum Beatae Virginis*.²⁷

Most of these writings have a predominantly edifying tendency and an oratorical form. The following especially possess these characteristics: the treatise *De gratiis et virtutibus Beatae Virginis* by Engelbert of Admont (d. 1331);²⁸ the *Mariale* by Archbishop Ernst of Prague,²⁹ a contemporary; the treatise *De Beata Virgine* in the

²⁴ St. Albert the Great, *Mariale sive quaestiones super Evangelium Missus est* (often appears under the title: *De laudibus B.M.V.*), in *Opera omnia*, ed. A. Borgnet, 1890 ff., Vol. 38. See further, among others, Genevois, *Bible Mariale et Mariologie de S. Albert-le-Grand*, Saint-Maximin, 1934; Bitremieux, *Marialia*, Brussels, 1936.

²⁵ Ed. Borgnet, Vol. 36; about this see Genevois, *op. cit.*, pp. 24 ff.

²⁶ St. Thomas, *Collationes de Ave Maria*, ed. by Parmensi (1852 ff.), XVI, 133 ff.

²⁷ This work is not genuine, as Scheeben himself remarks; it is by Conrad von Saxen and was carefully published in *Bibl. Francisc. asc. medi aevi*, Vol. II, Quaracchi, 1904. From the genuine works one should consult the *Sermones de B.M.V.* in the *Opera omnia*, ed. by Quaracchi, 1882, IX, 633-721; his *Commentarium in Lucam*, the first two chapters, *ibid.*, VII, 3-69, and in 3 Sent., dist. 1, p. 1, *ibid.*, III, 60-80.

²⁸ Published by Pez, *Thesaurus anecdotorum novissimus*, Vol. I, Augsborg, 1721.

²⁹ St. Ernst of Prague (1297-1364), *Mariale sive liber de praecellentibus et eximiis SS. Deigenitricis Mariae . . . praerogativis, ex arcanis S. Scripturae, SS. Patrum, Theologorum et Philosophiae naturalis mysteriis concinnatus*, Prague, 1651.

Summa of St. Antoninus (d. 1459);³⁰ several opuscula of Denys the Carthusian (1471);³¹ the extensive *Mariale* of the Franciscan, Bernardine dei Busti (d. 1500),³² which together with the work of Richard of St. Lawrence was later used as a main source by preachers and ascetics; and in the seventeenth century the even more extensive work of the Franciscan, John of Carthage, ³³ and a shorter one by the Capuchin, D'Argentan.³⁴

Toward the close of the Middle Ages, Bernardine of Siena and Thomas of Villanova³⁵ distinguished themselves as preachers on Mary by their deep and sublime conception of the matter. Against Protestantism, St. Peter Canisius delivered a classical defense of the entire Catholic doctrine on Mary in his five books *De Maria deipara Virgine*.³⁶ Medina and Suarez³⁷ wrote a sound treatise

³⁰ St. Antoninus, *Summa theol.* (1740), pars 4, tit. 15; sec. 916–1270.

³¹ Dionysius Carthus., especially *De praeconio et dignitate Mariae* and *De dignitate et laudibus B.M.V.*, in *Opera omnia*, XXXV, 479–576 and XXXVI, 13–176 (Tournay, 1908).

³² Bernardine dei Busti, *Mariale sive sermones 63 de bb. V. Maria non modo per singulas eius festivitates, sed et per omnia anni sabbata ad concionandum accommodatum*, 4 vols., 1494.

³³ John of Carthage, *Homiliae catholicae de sacris arcanis Deiparae Mariae et Iosephi*, Paris, 1614.

³⁴ Louis-François d'Argentan, *Conférences sur les grandeurs de la T. S. Vierge*, Paris, 1877, translated into various languages. See Dillenschneider, *La Mariologie de S. Alphonse de Liguori* (Fribourg, 1931), I, 187–94. In the first volume, which we shall cite in the following notes, Dillenschneider places the work of St. Alphonse in its proper historical background.

³⁵ St. Bernardine of Siena, *Sermones de b. Virgine*, in *Opera omnia* (Lyons, 1650), IV, 73–138; separately Nuremberg, 1473 (a critical edition does not yet exist). See P. Thureau-Dangin, *Un prédicateur populaire dans l'Italie de la Renaissance*, Paris, 1896; A. G. Ferraers-Howell, *St. Bernardine of Siena*, London, 1913; Emmerich Blondeel, *L'influence d'Ubertin de Cassale sur les écrits de S. Bernardin de Sienne*, in *Collectanea Franciscana* (Assisi, 1935), V, 5–44. S. Thomas of Villanova, *Opera omnia*, Augsburg, 1757 (*Marian sermons*, pp. 499–512; 545–664).

³⁶ Published in Bourassé, *Summa Aurea*, Vols. VIII and IX. Cf. Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I, 109–13.

³⁷ For Suarez as Mariologist, see Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I, 157–61. *Summa theol.*, III, 27 ff.

based on St. Thomas' treatment of the question. On this treatise Rodez in his *Summa* later built a rich scholastic system.³⁸ Petavius³⁹ collected the material of the Fathers regarding the main questions of Mariology.

The seventeenth century produced a vast number of Mariological works,⁴⁰ written for the greater part in a scientific form, though frequently lacking scientific sincerity and circumspection. Among these the writings of Spinelli, *Thronus Dei*, and of Novatus, *De eminentia Deiparae*,⁴¹ have the reputation of excelling because of their soundness. On the other hand, the *Theologia Mariana* (1866) of the Jesuit, Christopher de Vega,⁴² strikingly represents the eccentric "wig-theology" which at that time was prevalent, permitting much that was arbitrary and in bad taste and making a display of new and fanciful ideas.

Against the frivolity and search for novelty, the learned Jesuit, Theophile Raynaud, whose taste did not completely escape the influence of the "wig-period," then wrote in his caustic way the solid work *Diptycha Mariana*,⁴³ so called because in it the farina and furfur in Mariological teaching are distinguished. In the seventeenth century, Mariology is treated in a sound and profound

³⁸ Georges de Rhodes, S.J., *Disputationes theologicae scholasticae*, tract. 8, *De Maria Deipara*. For this excellent work, see Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I 178-82.

³⁹ Petavius, *Dogmata theol.*, ed. by Vives, 1866, Vol. VII, *De incarnatione*, Bk. XIV, chaps. 1-9. See Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I, 167-70.

⁴⁰ The mere enumeration of the works produced during this period occupies 500 pages in Roskovany's catalogue.

⁴¹ Spinelli, *Maria Deipara thronus Dei*, 1613; Novatus, *De eminentia Deiparae Virginis*, 2nd ed., Rome, 1637; much praised by Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I, 160-66.

⁴² Cf. Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I, 176-78.

⁴³ Theophile Raynaud, *Diptycha Mariana, quibus inanes B. Virginis prerogativae plerisque novis scriptionibus vulgatae a probatis et veris apud Patres theologosque receptis solide et accurate secernuntur*, Lyons, 1654. In Vol.

way in some of Cardinal Bérulle's opuscula and in Bossuet's ⁴⁴ Marian sermons, which next to those of St. Bernard and St. Thomas of Villanova are indeed the most important of their kind.

Of the eighteenth century works, the *Theologia Mariana* of the German Benedictine, Sedlmayr,⁴⁵ is fairly sound theoretically, but from a critical viewpoint it is rather naïve.

Of modern writings the following should be pointed out as particularly valuable monographs: Passaglia, *De immaculato deiparae semper virginis conceptu* (3 vols., 1854); Ventura, *La Madre di Dio* (2 vols., 1841); Borgia-nelli, *La maternità divina* (1874); Ludovico di Castelpiano, *Maria nel consiglio dell' Eterno* (1872), of which, unfortunately, only two of the four volumes have been finished; Auguste Nicolas, *La Vierge Marie* (4 vols., 1856); Haine, *De hyperdulia* (1864); Bishop Laurent, *Die heiligen Geheimnisse Maria* (3 vols., 1856-70); Morgott, *Die Mariologie des Hl. Thomas* (1878).

VII of his *Opera omnia* (Lyons, 1665), under the general title *Marialia*, are also collected his *Nomenclator Marianus* and *De retinendo titulo immaculatae conceptionis Deiparae Virginis*. See Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I, 170-76.

⁴⁴ For Bérulle as Mariologist, see Dillenschneider, I, 230-34; A. Molien, *Les grandeurs de Marie d'après les écrivains de l'école française*, Paris, 1936, where the texts of Bérulle and his school regarding Mary have been collected. For Bossuet, cf. Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, I, 134-39; Bourdaloue is also mentioned, *ibid.*, I, 139-45.

⁴⁵ *Theologia Mariana* (1758), published in Bourassé, *Summa Aurea*, Vols. VII and VIII.

PART II
CHRISTOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS
OF
MARIOLOGY

CHAPTER V

The Virginal Conception¹

THE doctrine about the incarnation of the Logos by the Holy Ghost implies in its full extent that the union itself is accomplished by a supernatural action of God, and also that the assumed "flesh" did not exist beforehand, but that it is especially formed and produced for the incarnation at the very moment of the union. This, again, is brought about through a supernatural action of the Holy Ghost, and not through the action of a natural principle of production. Thus in the realization of the incarnation of the Logos, or in the begetting of Christ, the *actio productiva humanitatis* and the *actio unitiva* combine to form one complete divine action.

At the same time the doctrine indicates that the Holy Ghost formed Christ's flesh of the Virgin Mary, and in such a way that Christ according to His humanity is truly produced and born of her. Hence the supernatural action of the Holy Ghost did not exclude the cooperation of a maternal process in producing the humanity of Christ, or Christ himself, but rather explicitly intended it and directly brought it about.

According to the Creed, the divine action of the Holy Ghost and the action of Mary as mother appear next to

¹ Literature: Lombardus, *In 3 S.*, dist. 3; followed by St. Bonaventure, Estius, St. Thomas, *ibid.*, and *Summa theol.*, IIIa, q. 9, a. 31-34; and Suarez, Sylvius; Thomassinus, *Dogmata theol.*, Bk. II, chaps. 3 f.; Raynaud, *Diptycha Mariana*, Bk. III, sec. 2, chap. 3.

each other and in each other. Mary is a principle of Christ's humanity, or of Christ Himself according to His humanity—a principle subservient to the Holy Ghost, influenced by Him,² and working in union with Him.³

To elucidate the character and meaning of these different actions, each one by itself and in its relation to the other, and also in connection with those *actiones* through which the person whom they have in view as their object became Christ, namely, the *actio unitiva* and the *generatio aeterna*, we begin with the lowest and from it ascend to the highest. Taking first the principle which presents the matter for the forming of Christ, from it we proceed to the principle out of which comes the form which makes Christ the Christ.

I. THE VIRGINAL CONCEPTION FROM THE VIEW-POINT OF THE *Actio Productiva Humanitatis*

THE ROLE OF MARY IN THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

Considering Mary's part in producing Christ's humanity, the Nicene formula "born of the Virgin Mary" means especially the following: (1) Mary was the *principium materiale* of the flesh of Christ, His matter or substance being thus taken of her flesh and not brought from heaven or directly formed of the earth as was the flesh of Adam. This origin alone, at least in a general way, is not sufficient to enable one to say, according to the Apostles' Creed, that Christ is brought forth from and by Mary. Otherwise it

² *Natus de Spiritu sancto ex Maria Virgine* (ancient Western form of the Apostles' Creed). Cf. Denzinger, 1937 ed., no. 2.

³ *Natus ex Spiritu sancto et Maria Virgine* (Eastern form of the Creed). See *ibid.*, no. 9 and no. 86 (the Greek text of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed).

must also be said that Eve is brought forth from Adam. (2) In forming Christ's body Mary cooperated mainly by her natural activity, in the same manner as every other mother cooperates in forming a human body.

The cooperation consists in this: (a) The natural activity of the mother prepares the formation of a human body, even before the influence of an external principle which cooperates in procreation. For that formation it delivers an organic seed susceptible of impregnation as *materia proxima*, which then needs only a fitting determination from without to effectively become a human body and thus to develop into a living fruit of the mother. (b) The natural activity of the mother accomplishes the complete formation and development of the fruit, thereby enabling it to live independently and apart from the mother, and then bringing it into the world.

The first of these actions, the one through which the mother at conception, i.e., in receiving the impregnating influence, cooperates in the originating of the fruit, is the fundamental and most important; and this cooperation is therefore preferably called "productive action." The second action, however, that of developing and bringing into the world, is secondary. As bearing (*parere*), or preparing for the birth (*parturire*) of the fruit, it differs from production in the strict sense, as regards both the mother and the father. Yet, even in the *parturire* it is a productive action, because it includes a continuous communication of the substance of the mother to the fruit. Together with the first, the fundamental action, it thus forms the complete productive process natural to the mother.

Even the "bearing" in a narrower sense, the bringing into the world, as the conclusion to the mother's produc-

tive action, is sometimes called "producing," particularly in the old languages. Vice versa, the entire productive activity, since it is natural to the mother, can also be called "bearing," for it is intended to give full form and development to the seed of a living being assumed into the mother from an external source, and then to bring it into the world.

To understand the dogma of the motherhood of Mary it is important that we measure her productive activity, not according to the abstract idea of propagation, as it belongs also to the father, but according to the specific idea which belongs to the mother as mother. Almost all the difficulties that heretics raised against the motherhood of Mary, and all the reasons why many took offense at the expression "Mother of God" and wished to take this merely as a figurative way of speaking rather than as a true *Deipara*, essentially arose from the fact that the specific character of all maternal production was left out of consideration.

Unlike the paternal production, the maternal production according to its essence is only a cooperation with another principle, a principle which in reality determines the existence of the fruit and on which, therefore, the existence of the person principally depends. The mother's relation to the principle acting upon her and to the person whose mother she becomes, is merely that of one serving. Through her productive activity, she prepares or forms a body for him and thus contributes not directly to his existence as a person, but only to the material side of his being or substance, according to which she brings him into the world.

For these reasons, in reference to God Himself we speak

not of a maternal but of a paternal production; and for the same reasons the maternal production can without any difficulty be referred to a person who already exists by himself before this process and who through it receive merely a second, a bodily existence.

The Fathers usually consider the purport and form of the productive activity of Mary according to its primary element in this way: Mary supplied the *materia proxima* for the flesh of Christ through the preparation of her blood, or through secretion of a part of her blood. Many, however, definitely deny that with regard to her we can say: "seed of the woman." But this term is used in the protevangelium. Without the underlying idea of a maternal seed, which by nature is directed to the fruit to be formed therefrom, the concept of production, as with natural mothers, can but insufficiently be maintained in regard to Mary. Many theologians have realized the fact,⁴ and in agreement with the observations of modern physiology we must strictly adhere to it.⁵

Since the Fathers as a rule speak of the forming of the body of Christ from the blood of Mary, there can be no objections to this theory. For, in accordance with the Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers understand by "blood" in general, as also in the case of the male production, the *materia generationis*, thus likewise the "male seed." It should be noted that many of the more ancient theologians express the opinion that the body of Christ should at least be considered as formed "out of the flesh of the Virgin,"⁶ as the Fathers often do.

⁴ See Raynaud, *op. cit.*

⁵ Scheeben refers to a concise Latin explanation of this *processus physiologicus*. See Appendix 2.

⁶ Cf. Frassen, *De incarnatione*, disp. 3, art. 3, sec. 3.

Theologically the "forming from the blood" appears most questionable if we accept with Scotus ⁷ that blood does not receive its form through the soul, and if this theory is carried to the extent that in our case it is said: the matter of the body of Christ was never "informed" through the soul of Mary, and thus was never constituent of her nature. Thus the real production of Christ from Mary is completely excluded. Scotus can escape from this conclusion only by his theory about the active cooperation of the mother in production at the moment of conception.

What the theologians, together with the more ancient physiologists, formerly called *seminatio mulieris*, is not admissible in the case of Mary, for it corresponds to the *seminatio virilis*, with which only it can concur. On the other hand it is a beautiful thought that in the immediate and complete forming of the body of Christ by the Holy Ghost the lifeblood of the mother was also used, just as it was later used for the feeding and development of the conceived fruit.

The appropriateness of Christ's humanity according to the ordinary way of human production lies, for the greater part, in the close relationship of Christ's material substance with the human race, upon which His substance is based in His visible and most complete union with mankind, and in His position as "Head" and "Mediator."⁸

Nevertheless this reasoning does not require a paternal propagation; for the latter is contrary to Christ's dig-

⁷ Scotus, *In 3 S.*, d. 3, q. 2; ed. Vives, XIV, 177.

⁸ The temporal and corporal origin of Christ also had to be a special reflection and glorification of His eternal origin, which had been effected through a real production.

nity and His pre-eminence over man, which is necessary for the redemption. From the viewpoint of the active relationship to the existence of the fruit, the paternal propagation is much more a figure of the eternal production; but for that very reason its cooperation with the eternal creation in reference to the same product would tend to obscure rather than to glorify the same. God the Father would, in that way, no longer be the only Father of the Son, but His Son would seem dependent on yet another father. More easily and naturally can a human maternal production accord with the divine paternal production, since the former is naturally subservient to the latter. Moreover, from a double standpoint, the human maternal production is a more complete figure of the eternal creation than is the human paternal production because of the communication of the personal substance of the producer to the fruit and of the consummation of the production in the bosom of the productive principle. And precisely in these two factors consists the significance of the human production of Christ in relation to His visible and complete union with the rest of mankind, and further in relation His position as Redeemer of man.

Lastly, the maternal production of Christ offers this further advantage. As in the fall of man, so likewise in the redemption, the woman appears coactive with the man; furthermore, the female sex receives its own share in the elevation and glorification of human nature effected through the Incarnation, in which the male sex is represented by the fruit of the production. The last point is of still greater significance; for through this distinction of the woman the highest conceivable elevation of a created

person (Mary) was achieved, surpassed only by the highest conceivable elevation of a created nature in the man (Christ).

It is not accidental that for the highest elevation of nature the male sex was chosen, and for the elevation of the *person* the female. This nature, hypostatically united to God, must represent God Himself in His position of royalty and as bridegroom of the creature; the male sex alone could do this. On the other hand the highest elevation of a created person to the union with God finds its expression in the relationship of the bride to the bridegroom, and for that reason it is naturally represented in the female sex.⁹

THE DETERMINATION OF THE MATERNAL PRINCIPLE IN THE INCARNATION

Although in producing Christ's flesh Mary accomplished all that natural mothers accomplish, there is still an essential difference in the principle through which and in the manner in which the required determination of the female principle took place from without.

When the doctrine of faith asserts that Christ is "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," the natural determination through a material male principle and a material male seed is excluded. On the other hand, a supernatural determination is established through a purely spiritual principle and a purely spiritual power.

In this way this production receives, besides the natural human privileges, those also which are attached to the production of the children of God, as is written in the

⁹ Cf. Thomassinus, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, chaps. 1 f.; St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 31, a. 4; St. Bonaventure, *In 3 S.*, d. 12, a. 2.

prologue of the Gospel of St. John.¹⁰ It is: (1) not of the will of man, but directly of the will of God; (2) neither of the will of the flesh on the part of the mother, since the desire of the flesh, being only in the production, is directed to the union with the man; finally, (3) neither "of blood," or more correctly, of the mixing of blood,—the latter here taken in a general sense—but of a seed formed and vivified, or brought to bud, by a spiritual influence of God.

Moreover, by this production the origin of Christ receives, without detriment to the reality of the female production, a special likeness to the directly divine origin of the natural ancestor of mankind. This likeness holds also an essential difference; for, befitting Christ's position as the second and spiritual ancestor, sprung from the same race, this origin makes Him appear at the same time as Son of man by true production.

Since, besides the origin by direct creation and that by natural production, there is still a third manner of coming into existence, namely, the origin of Eve from Adam, the Fathers refer to the Christ's origin as the fourth mode. It completes the series of all conceivable modes, and, as the most perfect, bears in itself what is most perfect in each.¹¹

The supernatural and purely spiritual manner of determination which really took place in the origin of Christ was indeed so fitting that the natural way would have been inappropriate. The reasons adduced for this are usually in reference to the honor of the mother. It would have conflicted with the sublimity of her divine motherhood had she lost her virginal honor and purity through the act which exalted her to that highest dignity. And,

¹⁰ John 1:12 f.

¹¹ Cf. St. Anselm, *Cur Deus homo*, Bk. II, chap. 8; *PL*, CLVIII, 406.

indeed, that Mary, like ordinary mothers in the fallen state, should be subject through that act to sensual lust, would altogether conflict with her sublime dignity. Nor is any form of humiliation compatible with it, such as would have pertained to sexual production even in the original state. The Mother of God may never be tainted with sensual lust; she must not be subject to the will of man. Lastly, there, precisely where she becomes the temple of God, she may not in any manner whatever lose her bodily integrity.

More profound reasons for the appropriateness of Christ's supernatural determination are found in the exalted dignity of the product and in its position and significance.

1) First of all, the divinity of the Person for whom the flesh was formed and the dignity of His eternal production demand that no paternal principle, apart from God, should cooperate in the forming. For, in human production, the paternal principle determines through its will the actual existence of the fruit in general and the existence of the soul in particular, and through it also, in a natural manner, the existence of the person himself. The temporal existence of a divine Person must not, however, be determined through the will of a creature; especially as regards His soul, He must not stand in a relation of essential dependence on a creature.¹²

2) Christ's temporal production by the mother must not be in contradiction to His eternal production, but must be a perfect reflection of it. This temporal production can be such a reflection only if it is effected by a holy and purely spiritual power from a single principle. In other words, as

¹² Furthermore, He must not enter into a relation with a created principle that would make Him dependent on that principle, if not actually, at least in appearance.

the Son of God by Himself is brought forth as "light of light," here His bodily production must also be actualized, not through the mixing of material elements, but through a heavenly influence on the earthly element.

3) Moreover, the production of the humanity and of the human flesh itself—or the determination of the maternal principle—must occur in such a way that it is directed externally and internally to the union with the product of the eternal production. This can be effected only when this determination also takes place in a supernatural manner by a supernatural principle, just as the union itself.

4) On the other hand, the bodily origin of Christ must be so arranged that through it Christ actually comes in touch with the race, but at the same time does not become dependent on its first head and come under the influence of the sin connected with that race. As the new and higher Head of the race, He must, in virtue of the very manner of His origin, rather excel the first. Also, as the principle of the restoration and re-creation of the race, He must be ushered into that race from above by an act of God, analogous to the creation of the first parents.

5) Consequently, the bodily production of Christ must be the prototype and assurance of the spiritual and holy regeneration of men as children of God and also the pledge of the glorious regeneration of the entire man in his resurrection. As the prototype of man's resurrection, Christ's bodily production must be directly carried out by God Himself through divine power. In particular, it must also be the prototype of the virginal motherhood of the Church, whereby, as the instrument of the Holy Ghost, she cooperates in the regeneration of men as children of God.

6) Lastly, with this is connected the fact that the flesh of Christ must, above all other flesh, be distinguished as vivifying, that is, as the seat and instrument of the power of God's vivifying Spirit; and for that purpose it must be specially formed. It must, therefore, be formed only by Him who alone has the power to make it a vivifying flesh and for whom it should serve as seat and instrument. The Fathers like to express this as follows: the bread of life, which bears in itself the power of the Holy Ghost, had also to be prepared through the ardor of the Holy Ghost.¹³

THE DIVINE INFLUENCE ON THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

In contrast with the natural influence which the *semen materiale* exerts on the mother and by which the father thus bestows the very substance of the flesh, the supernatural influence of God on the maternal principle appears before and in the production of Christ's flesh as the influence of a purely spiritual principle and of a purely spiritual power on the forming and vivifying of the substance of the flesh, which alone is taken of the mother. In this sense the supernatural influence is clearly characterized in the angel's annunciation of Christ's conception, as a coming of the Holy Ghost upon the virgin and an overshadowing of the virgin by the power of the Most High.¹⁴ At the same time there is herein contained an allusion to the most beautiful symbols of a higher influence that leaves its substratum intact, namely, the light, the breath, and the dew.

Significantly the Holy Ghost appears here not simply

¹³ Cf. Thomassinus, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, chaps. 3 f.; St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 28, a. 1.

¹⁴ Cf. Luke 1:35.

as exercising an influence upon the virgin. He Himself is infused into her as the substantial bearer or vehicle of the forming power radiating from the heavenly Father; and to that extent He takes the place of the *semen materiale*, which in natural propagation issues from the human father and carries in itself his power. For that reason the Fathers sometimes call Him *semen divinum*, the divine seed.

In this manner both the heavenly and the earthly production so concur, even in their differences, that the former leads back to a heavenly Father just as the latter leads back to an earthly father, and the production process with the heavenly Father is completely represented according to the analogy of the earthly father. However, as contrasted with the material seed, the infusion of the Holy Ghost concerns merely the forming of the body of Christ, not the constitution of Christ through the substance of the Holy Ghost; and for that very reason it does not make the Holy Ghost an element of the production. In this instance the Holy Ghost acts only upon another production principle without Himself becoming the principle of the production or the paternal principle of the humanity of Christ.

For three reasons the Holy Ghost cannot be considered under these aspects. (1) He does not constitute the flesh of Christ through His own substance. (2) The humanity of Christ is not brought forth by Him as a nature consubstantial with His nature or specifically similar to it. (3) The Holy Ghost in His own person does not occupy a position which belongs to Him alone; He must be understood as working in union with the other Persons and in particular in the power of the Father. Still less in regard to His in-

fluence may He be called Father of the man Christ. This is evident from the fact that otherwise Christ too, as God, could be father of Himself as man.¹⁵

In the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Virgin the influence upon the production of the flesh of Christ is attributed to the third divine Person as the author, *per appropriationem*. This attribution is quite proper and significant for the following reasons. (1) First of all, the forming and vivifying of matter, particularly the creating and producing of the first man, is generally ascribed to the Holy Ghost as the finger and breath of God. (2) Next, the influence of God, particularly with the forming of the flesh of Christ, has the closest relation with the *actio unitiva*; for it forms this flesh precisely to make it the flesh of the Logos. Also for that reason the divine action likewise occupies the position of the human paternal influence, because it alone can form the flesh in a manner appropriate to that end. Hence the production of the flesh of Christ must be appropriated to the Holy Ghost for all those reasons for which the *actio unitiva* is attributed to Him.¹⁶ (3) The very name of the Holy Ghost clearly indicates how He in an eminent and entirely unique manner truly takes the place of the natural vehicle of production. (4) To these reasons must be added those advanced for the appropriateness of the divine influence upon the virginal production and set forth above.¹⁷

The words of the angel, "The power of the Most High shall overshadow thee," are understood by some as indicating a *terminus generativus*, which can be applied in

¹⁵ See also p. 99.

¹⁶ See Appendix 3.

¹⁷ See Appendix 3.

natural production to the relation of man with woman, and from this latter relation was applied to the production of Christ's flesh by the Holy Ghost. But this supposition is hard to prove. Apart from it, the very connection of "the overshadowing" with "the power of the Most High" forbids this explanation. The analogy of this overshadowing must lie in the cloud which elsewhere in the Sacred Scriptures serves as a symbol of God's power which descends from above, impregnates, vivifies, and invigorates, and which is also applied to the origin of Christ in the sign of the prophet: "and let the clouds rain the just."¹⁸

Understood thus, the "overshadowing" means the divine influence in its analogy to the natural action of the man, and at the same time, and still more, in its exaltedness above this; that is, as an influence of a heavenly, spiritual principle upon an earthly and material one. It also maintains the closest relation to the "coming of the Holy Ghost," which must be understood as analogous to the moving of the Holy Spirit over the waters of the primeval world. In this manner we derive the following beautiful meaning: the Spirit of God which originally descended over the chaos as principle of light and life and which formed the first creation, now forms the second and higher creation out of the virgin.

Moreover, this idea paves the way for a yet deeper explanation of the words we have been considering. This explanation is taken from the cloud which overshadowed the ark of the covenant and symbolized the habitation of God. Further, this idea has a natural relation to the deeper meaning of the "overshadowing" or of the words "let the

¹⁸ Isa. 45:8.

clouds rain the just," which include the uniting action as well.¹⁹

THE COMPLETE FORMING OF THE BODILY ORGANISM OF CHRIST IN THE INCARNATION

In the production of Christ, instead of a natural principle of determination, "the Holy Spirit" and "the power of the Most High," that is, of the Almighty Creator of nature, determine the origin of the bodily fruit. From this it naturally follows that this determination not only gave the first stimulus to the gradual forming of the bodily organism of the fruit which had to be completed under the co-operating influence of the mother, but also could immediately and of itself achieve the entire organism, at least in its essential parts.

That this happened can readily be presumed from the character of the principle. The same, however, may also be concluded from the fact that otherwise the body could not be the worthy seat of the divine Person and of the soul which was spiritually active from the first moment. The first forming of Christ's body was thus carried out, both on the part of the principle and on that of the object, *modo creativo*, in the same manner, if not in the same measure, as the forming of the body of the first Adam.²⁰ In this respect Mary's cooperation could not be entirely the same as that of a mother in natural production.

Hence the first stimulus in producing the organism for the body of Christ lies entirely in the divine principle, so that by it "Wisdom hath built herself a house;"²¹ and to

¹⁹ See *infra*, pp. 80 ff. and 92 ff.

²⁰ Cf. St. John Damascene, no. 24.

²¹ Prov. 9:1.

that extent Mary is much more passive and receptive to the influence of the Holy Ghost than a natural mother is to the influence of a man. But for that reason she was no less a party to the production of her fruit than is a natural mother. In another respect she is even more active than an ordinary mother. For, though she acts less upon the forming of her fruit, on the other hand she receives no material influence whatever from an external source; she is by herself the sole and complete material principle of her offspring.

The lack of an active material influence upon the Virgin does not prevent her product from being a fruit brought forth by her in the same way as that in which the producing of the fruit is attributed to other mothers. In natural production the seed becomes a fruit at the very first moment that the determination is received from an outer source, and the maternal process in the very origin of the fruit is essentially only to receive the principle that will complete what the mother by her activity has prepared for this purpose.

To secure the doctrine of Mary's motherhood some theologians²² hold the view that at the moment of conception there is still another generative activity which only then comes into operation and is subject to a supernatural influence. This influence, as a final preparation of the matter, effects God's immediate cooperation in the production of the fruit. Because of the perfection of Mary's motherhood, most theologians, including St. Thomas, do not find this supposition necessary. On the

²² Foremost among these are St. Bonaventure, *In 3 S.*, d. 4, 2. 3, q. 1; and, work by Migne (*PL*, XLII, 1211 ff.; LVIII, 979 ff.; LXXXIII, 1227 ff.), *In 3 S.*, d. 4, q. 2.

contrary, because of the divine action they regard this view as unacceptable and therefore place the generative activity of the mother before the moment of conception.

On the other hand, by the cooperation of the mother, which takes place immediately at the moment of conception, we can also understand the vital and voluntary absorption and accommodating spirit which must mark that conception as an active one and not merely a passive one. Such a cooperation should be accepted with regard to Mary as well as with regard to a natural mother, but in a higher manner, as a spiritual and supernatural absorption and accommodating spirit.

In natural conception the sensual passion—carnal appetite—cooperates with it and makes it a vital deed. With regard to Mary, however, there is instead of this carnal appetite an activity of the mother answering the divine action: the supernatural subjection of her spirit to the will of God and the surrender, borne by a heavenly love, of her flesh to the influence of the Holy Ghost for the purpose for which He desires to use it. Thus we can say of her that she has conceived both in spirit and in body.

This vital and voluntary offering of the matter previously prepared for the formation of a human body is necessary and also sufficient to place the foregoing preparation of the matter in organic connection with the “forming” of the matter, which is derived from an external source and to give to the latter its relation to the preparation.

II. THE VIRGINAL CONCEPTION IN CONNECTION WITH THE *Actio Unitiva* AND THE *Generatio Aeterna Verbi*

As the body of Christ is directly formed by divine action, His entire humanity comes forward as an immediate work of God, or particularly of the Holy Ghost; for His soul also is created and infused into the body by God Himself. Hence the bringing forth of the complete humanity is traced to the same influencing cause by which the hypostatic union of the humanity with the Son is effected; the *actio productiva* together with the *actio unitiva* thus forms one undivided and all-embracing action of God: the producing of the entire Christ. In passive form the Nicene Creed declares: *incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto*, and the Apostles' Creed: *conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto*.

FULL MEANING OF *conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto*

With regard to this complete action, the phrase in the Creed, *de Spiritu Sancto*, has a double meaning according to St. Thomas, who follows the example of many Fathers.²³ The preposition *de* indicates the Holy Ghost not only as the principle of an effect created and produced by Him, but also as the principle of the introduction of His own divine substance into the fruit, and thus into the womb of the Virgin, where this fruit comes into being. The personal action of the Holy Ghost in the *actio unitiva* consists precisely in this, that He Himself through the Son ushers the divine substance into the humanity which He

²³ St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 32, a. 2; for the Fathers, see Thomassinus, *op. cit.*, Bk. VI, chaps. 1 ff.

formed. This He alone could do, because He is consubstantial with the Son, and the substance of the latter is thus His also.

The descent of the Holy Ghost announced by the angel should for that reason be understood in this fuller sense. The reference to it had to overcome Mary's fear of losing her virginity, and at the same time it was mentioned as the reason (*propterea*) why the fruit in her womb would be something most holy, the Son of God Himself. Yet by this operation the Holy Ghost does not stand in the relationship of father to Christ: (a) He appropriates the humanity to the person of the Son of God as a second nature, for this human nature is not taken from the substance of the Holy Ghost and hence is not similar to His nature; (b) He uses the divine substance in the person of the Logos for the composition of Christ, for He communicates it, not as something which arises from Himself, but as something which is the principle of its own being.

THE "OVERSHADOWING" OF "THE POWER OF THE MOST HIGH"

There lies a further, deeper significance in the "overshadowing" of "the power of the Most High." Together with the descent of the Holy Ghost, "the power of the Most High" overshadowed the Virgin, not only as the divine power communicated to the Holy Ghost by which He could and must form the flesh of Christ and unite it with the Son, but also as the personal "power of the Most High," from which the Holy Ghost Himself arises—the Son of the Most High Himself. As Son "the power of the Most High" descended into Mary as into the true ark of the covenant, in order to dwell in her in a more perfect

way than this power had once dwelt in the cloud above the old ark of the covenant. For from Mary and in Mary, it formed its own body for itself.

This thought was also present in the mind of the Fathers when generally they indicated, not the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Godhead, but the second Person or the Son, represented according to His spiritual and holy nature, Himself the "offspring" and "fruit" of the divine production, as the divine seed which is in Mary and from which Christ is born. Accordingly the "overshadowing" of "the power of the Most High" means not only that in the production of Christ the influence of God on the forming of the body takes the place of the influence which belongs to the seed in natural propagation, but also that in the person of the Son the substance of God unites itself with the product of this action and forms the original nucleus of the being which proceeds from this production.

From this point of view the Fathers distinguish with regard to Mary a double receiving in the conception of Christ, in view of the formal contents of the passive conception or assuming: on the one hand the receiving of the substance of the Logos, in which the humanity must be formed; on the other hand the receiving of the divine influence by which this humanity must be formed. They consider the first element as *prior natura*; for the substance of the Logos not only exists before the humanity, but also forms the seed to which this humanity to be produced should be joined, as well as the foundation on which it is to be placed.

From this distinction there immediately follows a significant contradistinction between the substantial contents of the natural and of the supernatural conception.

In the former the mother receives from the father merely a material and seedlike nucleus of the fruit. This nucleus contains that principle which makes the fruit a person, namely, the spiritual soul only *intentionaliter*, or also in a certain sense *virtualiter*, so far as the soul must be infused by God in a natural way into the body to be formed through the natural power of the nucleus. On the other hand, in the supernatural conception of Christ, the mother receives the spiritual nucleus of the fruit which already exists as a person, indeed as a divine Person, and as such through His own spiritual power He forms and vivifies His own body in the mother.

The object and end of the natural conception is thus only the person, while its immediate and substantial contents are simply a material seed. In the supernatural conception the reverse is the case, the divine Person being the substantial and indeed the entire contents, for to this Person nothing material belongs. The body formed is the only object of that conception as fruit and end.

In connection with this the assuming and giving activity of the virginal mother in conceiving is immediately directed to the influence of the Holy Ghost or to her product, and also to the person of the Logos. She embraces the latter, as it were, with arms of heavenly love in order to lay Him in her womb, gives Him her flesh in order to clothe Him with it, and thus again receives her Son first in spirit and then in the flesh.

This entire doctrine is precisely expressed by St. John Damascene: "After the Blessed Virgin had given her assent the Holy Ghost came upon her, cleansing her and giving her abundant strength to conceive and bring forth the godhead of the Word. Then, the truly abiding wisdom

and power of the Most High, the Son of God who is co-substantial with the Father, overshadowed her in the form of divine seed, and formed for Himself from her spotless and most pure blood a body adorned with a rational and intellectual soul, the first fruit of our besprinkling—this, however, not by a procreation of seed, but, in accordance with the will of the Creator, by the Holy Ghost, so that the figure of the body was not achieved gradually by accessions, but was completed in one and the same moment—the same Word of God being made the hypostasis and person of the flesh; whereas the Word is not united with flesh in a person who already exists. . . . Wherefore it is flesh at the same time as it is the flesh of the Word of God, as it is the flesh adorned with a rational and intellectual soul.”²⁴

The application of “the power of the Most High” to the Son of God is common to many other Fathers of the Church, from whom Damascene borrowed it.²⁵ Several Fathers even went so far as to understand by *Spiritus Sanctus* in St. Luke not the third Person in the Divinity, but the second.²⁶ Although this is not theoretically false, the exegesis does not allow it. On the other hand, the application of “the power of the Most High” to the Son is also exegetically permissible and most probable. It answers more perfectly to the depth and harmony of the text. The Holy Ghost in His descent thus appears as mediator of the action and the descent of that Person from whom He Himself proceeds; and the Person represented as “the

²⁴ St. John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa*, Bk. III, chap. 2; PG, XCIV, 985 ff.

²⁵ Cf. Lequien, publisher of the works of St. John Damascene, in the aforementioned quotation, PG, XCIV, 985 ff.

²⁶ Cf. Coustant, *Praefatio ad opera S. Hilarii Pictaviensis*, sec. 1; PL, IX, 35–40.

power of the Most High" prepares for Himself a body in and by the Holy Ghost.

For good reasons the Fathers generally lay particular stress on the fact that the divine Person who assumed the flesh has, in this assumption, at the same time effected the formation of His humanity, or the building of His "temple." They do this in order that this Person may not appear as passive and dependent on the relation brought about by the passive conception, but would in this very relation step forward in His divine majesty and power. For not the purely voluntary *subire*, or *sustinere generationem carnalem*, as the Fathers express themselves, but only the powerful *facere sibi generationem carnalem* ²⁷ shields the carnal birth of the Logos from every shadow of humiliation to His being, or from an imperfection which might be supposed in it.

With these arguments the Fathers met the objections of the pagans and Nestorians against the possibility or propriety of the birth of the eternal Word from a woman. The concept of the Logos as *semen* in the bringing forth of Christ most emphatically secures the Catholic doctrine against that of Nestorius. For the Logos was hereby represented, not merely as though He belonged to the composition of Christ in an unimportant way, but simply as its nucleus and foundation.

MUTUAL RELATION OF THE *Actio productiva* AND THE *Actio unitiva*

Not only do these two actions by which Christ comes into being proceed from one principle and lead to one end, but their union is also much closer in Christ's conception

²⁷ Cf. Coustant, *op. cit.*

than in natural propagation and occurs in a manner slightly different from the natural forming of the body and the infusion of the soul into it. The relation of the productive action to the uniting action is, in regard to their end and completion, common to both kinds of conception, as is also the dependence of the latter on the former in their realization. The differences are the following:

1) In natural propagation the two actions, of preparation and completion, can indeed be separated in time, and it probably was the opinion of the theologians of olden times that they really are. According to the common teaching of the Fathers and theologians it is definitely established that in the case of Christ the production of the entire humanity and its union with the Logos both took place at the same moment. As to the time, the forming of the body does not precede the union with the soul, nor the union of both with the Logos. Hence the production of the entire humanity of Christ with all its elements, and the union of the same with the Logos, exactly coincide in time, just as in the propagation of the first man or, as in natural propagation, the creative production of the soul and its infusion into the body.

With regard to the completed humanity, the proof lies in this, that Christ would otherwise have been a human person before the union. As to the body, the proof lies particularly in the fact that the conception was the conceiving of God from the very first moment. The striking equality and similarity are further found in the fact that the separation and forming of the substance of the body, carried out by the Logos Himself, must, in view of His divine power and dignity, at the same time be attended by His most perfect possession of it.

Compare with this the many texts from the Fathers in Petavius and Thomassinus; ²⁸ in particular Sophronius in his "epistola synodica," approved by the Sixth Council.²⁹ The old translation of this classical text is very defective. For that reason we venture a new one: "The Word of God becomes man by accommodating Himself to a body not previously formed or to a soul not previously subsisting; but the moment they are brought into existence, the same Word of God and they unite. Hence simultaneously with their existence this body and soul unite physically with the Word. They did not exist before their real union with the Word. Their existence runs concurrently with their physical union with the Word, so that the one does not precede the other, not even by a wink of the eye. It becomes flesh at the same time that it becomes the flesh of the Word; it becomes flesh which is animated with a rational soul at the same time that it becomes the Word's animated body, because it finds its existence in the Word and not in itself. Together with the conception of the Word, this body and this rational soul, whereby it becomes flesh animated with a rational soul, are brought to consistency, that is, in one nature of animated flesh, and (together with this adduction to consistency) they are united with Him in a most real and indivisible hypostasis. They are produced by, constituted in, and form part of the same conceived Word." See also Fulgentius.³⁰

2) The temporal coincidence of the productive and uniting actions with regard to Christ's humanity bears an

²⁸ Petavius, *op. cit.*, Bk. IV, chap. 11; Thomassinus, *op. cit.*, Bk. III, chap. 11.

²⁹ Hardouin, *Conciliorum collectio*, III, 1267; PG, LXXXVII, 3161.

³⁰ Fulgentius, *De incarnatione et gratia*, chap. 3, no. 7; PL, LXV, 455.

analogy to the temporal coincidence of both actions in the origin of the human soul; however, the organic relationship of both actions is reversed. For the creation of the soul *ratione et natura* precedes the infusion of it into the body in the same way as the first forming of the body precedes the assuming of the soul. With the infusion of the Logos into the humanity of Christ the uniting action *ratione et natura* precedes in a certain sense the productive one; the uniting action is to the productive action as the infusion of the seed is to the forming and vivifying of the fruit, which through it has come into being or has been prepared.

The infusion of the Logos clearly precedes the production of the entire humanity, so far as the latter comes into being through the union of body and soul or through the vivifying of the body by the soul. Both imperfect substances are not united with the Logos for the first time through this union with one another. But in and with their origin—the body in its formation and the soul at its creation—they are already united with the Logos; as they are united with the Word, so are they united with one another.

This alone is sufficient reason why it can and must be said with the Fathers that the conception of the Logos—i.e., the receiving of the Logos, who forms for Himself His own flesh and, to vivify it, creates for Himself His own soul—*ratione et natura* precedes and forms the basis for the origin of Christ as man in the womb of the Virgin, and consequently also the conception of Christ as man. On the part of the mother the first and proximate element in the conception of the Logos is again the receiving of the

Logos, so far as He forms a body for Himself in her womb and from it. To make the body live, the soul is thus infused into a body which already belongs to the Logos.

Perhaps we may go a step further and say: In relation to the productive action, so far as it is brought into connection, not with the vivifying of the flesh, but with the organic forming of it, the uniting action is in a sense *ratione et natura* first. These words should be understood as meaning that the influence which formed the flesh, not in and for any other person, but for and in the forming principle itself, also formed it as a flesh already taken hold of by this principle and appropriated to Him. Thus the forming of Christ's flesh, not less than the vivifying of it, appears as a result and effect of the Logos, who was already united with it; as in natural propagation the forming and vivifying of the flesh is the effect and result of the male seed which has been taken up in the womb of the mother or has already communicated with the flesh of the mother.

At least in one sense the *actio unitiva Verbi* with regard to the virginal mother, and thus the *conceptio Verbi*, can be considered as preceding the *formatio carnis maternae*. This is true so far as it is considered the presentation and surrender of the Logos to foundation or bearer of the flesh which must be formed by Him, for Him, and in Him; and as the acceptance by the Logos of the flesh of the virgin to form it to His flesh. Here the *conceptio Verbi in carne sibi adformata* appears as conditioned and effected through the *conceptio Verbi suscipientis carnem de matre*, and the first as a *conceptio Verbi de Verbo*.

Most theologians teach the priority of the *actio unitiva* in the first sense, i.e., with regard to the producing of the

entire humanity. It is particularly used by Suarez to explain the divine motherhood. It should also be understood as the prior inference, when Leo I,³¹ as also Augustine,³² says: "Our nature is not so assumed that it was first created and then assumed, but that it was created by the same assumption." This priority of the *actio unitiva* is clearly expressed by Sophronius.³³

However, the second sense is also elucidated by both the Latin and the Greek Fathers. See especially Damascene and Fulgentius, and also Genaddius of Marseilles: "Hold most firmly that Christ's body, before being taken by the Word, was not conceived in the Virgin's womb without the godhead, but that the Word itself was conceived by the acceptance of His body and that the body itself was conceived by the Incarnation of the Word."³⁴ Ferrandus says: "God did not assume a human being already formed or conceived, or one that was at a certain age in life or that had already begun life in his mother's womb. But, before Mary conceived anything, and quite apart from the ordinary means or manner of forming any human being, God, willing to become man, entered the temple of the virginal womb, and, bestowing the gift of fecundity by virtue of His godhead, He assumed from her whom He willed as His mother a real body of our species."³⁵

³¹ St. Leo I, *Epist.*, 35 *ad Julian. Coens.*, chap. 3; *PL*, LIV, 807.

³² St. Augustine, *Contra serm. Arian.*, chap. 8; *PL*, XLII, 688.

³³ Cf. *supra*, note 29.

³⁴ St. John Damascene, *op. cit.*, and Fulgentius, *op. cit.* Gennadius of Marseilles, *Lib. eccles. dogmatum*. This sentence is not found verbatim, but as far as the meaning is concerned, it is seen in the various editions of this work by Migne (*PL*, XLII, 1211 ff.; LVIII, 979 ff.; LXXXIII, 1227 ff.), neither in the text of C. H. Turner, in *Journal of Theological Studies*, VII, 89-99.

³⁵ Ferrandus, *Epist. 5 ad Sever.*, no. 3; *PL*, LXVII, 912.

Maximus the Confessor and John Damascene express it still more clearly when they speak of the *infusio seminis divini*, or the *conceptio Verbi*, as prior not only with regard to the divine subsistency or deification, but also with regard to the physical reality of the flesh of Christ, and from this priority precisely deduce the necessary simultaneousness of both the physical reality and the divine subsistency of the flesh of Christ. Maximus says: "The Savior's humanity was made in and for Him according to one and the same hypostasis, and not produced, as we are, separately in and for itself. Hence, the Word had His own seed, while the divine subsistency and the physical existence began in Him at the same time." ³⁶ John Damascene is more explicit: "The Word is made flesh, truly conceived of the Virgin by the assumption of her flesh. He appears, indeed, as God in His own flesh which He deified the moment He brought it into existence; so that the following three happened simultaneously: the assumption, existence, and deification of the flesh by the Word. Hence the Blessed Virgin is perceived as, and is, the Mother of God, not only because of the conceived Word's own and originally divine nature but also because of the deification of the produced human nature, the conception and existence of which were wonderfully effected at the same time: that is, the conception of the Word and the existence of the flesh in the same conceived Word (in which case the deification of the flesh is *ipso facto* included)." ³⁷

This profound idea of the *conceptio Verbi* as the foundation for the existence of the assumed flesh has re-

³⁶ St. Maximus, *Ad Georgium*; PG, XCI, 61.

³⁷ St. John Damascene, *op. cit.*, Bk. III, chap. 12; PG, XCIV, 1032.

mained rather unfamiliar to the Scholastics. At first sight it seems, indeed, to lead to the Thomistic doctrine, also applied to the explanation of Mary's motherhood. According to that doctrine the humanity in the divine person received both its subsistence and its full existence in and through this one action, in so far as this means that the production of the humanity, or of its elements, receives its completion only through the *actio unitiva*. Thereby is indicated essentially only a relation analogous to the one existing between the human body and the human soul; the realization of the body by itself is not conditioned through its union with the soul and precedes *natura et ratione* the full human subsistence and existence of the body.

In fact, most theologians teach with St. Thomas that the *actio productiva humanitatis*, so far as it is brought in connection with the component parts of the humanity and effects their *esse essentiale*, logically precedes the *assumptio*. Thus this theory is significant to Mary's divine motherhood only when it is already applied to truly human motherhood in the natural sphere, i.e., the maternal relation to the person of the child. On the other hand, the Fathers mentioned above speak of a *conceptio Verbi* or of an "assumption of the flesh," which underlies not only the divine subsistence and the divine existence of the flesh of Christ but also the realization of the flesh by itself, or His *esse physicum* (the *esse essentiale* of the Thomists), precisely as the *esse subsistentiae et existentiae divinae*. Unlike the Thomists, the Fathers do not base their theory simply on the idea of the substantial union of a formal with a material principle. They base it on the fact that the formal principle here is at the same time the

one which forms *efficienter*, or prepares its substratum for itself. Thus the forming or preparation of the substratum then presents itself as a formation within the principle which already dwells within it.

Accordingly this process, as shown by the analogy with the material seed, to which the Fathers appeal, is similar to the natural organic forming of matter through an organic principle of this matter; before it can be formed it must have been taken up in this principle, and the forming of it by itself is not only directed to the forming within the principle, but must be regarded beforehand as a forming which takes place in it.

THE RELATION OF BOTH ACTIONS IN TIME TO THE ETERNAL PRODUCTION

The uniting action combines with the eternal production of Christ and achieves with it an external birth of the Son of God and a production of Christ from God the Father. So also the productive action, in virtue of its close relationship to the uniting action, is linked with the eternal production, so that it can be taken together with the latter to form one total action directed to the birth of the Son of God *ad extra* and the production of Christ from God; and as such it can and must particularly and exclusively be ascribed to God the Father.

From this point of view one can understand by the "power of the Most High," which descends in and with the Holy Ghost as through its vehicle, not only the very personal power of God or of the Son of God, but also the productive power of the eternal Father, who reveals Himself in this Person and makes Him the personal power of

God. This productive power of the Father then overshadows the bosom of the Virgin in order to combine His spiritual product with the flesh taken from her, and to form and vivify this very flesh. For the productive power of the Father is not only really identical with the power by which God works *ad extra*, it is also this very power in which all other productive and communicative powers are pre-eminently included, as in the principle of the first, highest, and richest production and communication of God. Hence to the fruit brought forth by it, it communicates all other powers of God, of whatever kind, in such a way that this latter itself becomes the personal power of God.

Consequently this particular concept of the overshadowing of the "power of the Most High" underlies the view of the Fathers, that in the origin of Christ the Logos is the divine seed of which Christ was formed. For the idea of this divine seed comprises in itself the fact that it is the fruit of a divine production and precisely as such is deposited in the mother by the principle of this production in order to appropriate her flesh and, as appropriated to Him, to form and vivify it.

Thus perceived, the conception in the Virgin is a conceiving or receiving of the Son of God through the reception of the power of His eternal Father, who produces Him. Accordingly the entire Christ does not appear simply as a common fruit of two productions which flow into His one person. These productions themselves also come to the foreground as organically united with each other in a manner analogous to the process of father and mother in the producing of natural offspring: the process

of the mother presupposes that of the father and is so determined by it and so depends on it that it is completely at its service.

Consequently this explains in the most simple and perfect way why, in virtue of its origin, the fruit of the Virgin is truly the Son of the Most High. Therefore the archangel rightly announced, "the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee." This also explains how the eternal Father gives His Son to the Virgin as her Son, by making her His mother; and conversely, how the Virgin gives her Son to the eternal Father as His Son, by giving birth to the latter by the Father and for Him.

There certainly is an essential difference between the cooperation of the two principles of human production and the collaboration of the human with the divine. In the first case a perfect son is brought forth only through the cooperation of both principles. In Christ's production, however, the Son comes forth from the paternal principle alone as a perfect son and as such exists and lives in the Father Himself, while the human principle is likewise the sole productive one in its domain.

Nevertheless, in complete accordance with the spirit of revelation and the language of the Church, the second production in its organic relation to the eternal one lends itself to consideration as a supplement, so far as the Son, produced from the Father and in Him, comes forth from the Father *ad extra* by being born of a mother in such a way that He has His own being and life apart from the Father. For, although the eternal production includes also a birth of the Son, so far as in its own manner it is perfect by itself, the production in time is still a birth in a narrower sense. Consequently the word *nasci* in the

Apostles' Creed is used simply in connection with the temporal birth of the Son of God.

Inasmuch as the temporal birth from the mother is under the influence of the eternal production and, therefore, the birth of the Son *ad extra* is also a work of the eternal Father, the temporal birth of the Son of God from the mother appears as an extension and completion *ad extra* of the eternal production of the Son, wrought and intended by the Father Himself. Through the mother He brings forth *ad extra* His Son, whom He Himself has begotten; or, as the Apostle says, "God sent His Son, made of a woman."³⁸

Conversely, however, the eternal origin and birth appear even more clearly as a supplement of the temporal production and birth from the mother. Precisely through the union of the personal product with the human nature this union makes the human being whom the temporal production has as end not merely a human being but Christ, the perfect image of the principle of the eternal production.

Still another difference exists between these two forms of collaboration of the two principles of production. In natural propagation the paternal principle is substantially connected with the fruit only through a material seed which proceeds from it. Hence it has lesser relations with the fruit and is merely a preparatory cause of its life, not the real effecting cause. In the supernatural production of Christ the paternal principle is connected with the product of the maternal process through a spiritual seed which remains in Himself. Thus it maintains closer relations with the product but, in virtue of the divine vital

³⁸ Gal. 4:4.

and vivifying power communicated by Him to the spiritual seed, it is at the same time in the most proper and strict sense the principle of the divine life of this fruit, and also of its human life.

According to the common definition, production is regarded as *origo viventis a vivente conjuncto*, namely, *emanatio substantiae ab hoc in illud*. In other words, it is a communication of life effected through the communication of the substance of him who produces. To that extent, therefore, the production of Christ as man may as truly be called a production from His divine Father as can the production of the natural man from a human father. This fact is true not only with regard to the communication of the uncreated life to this certain person, but also in view of the communication of the created life to His human nature or to His flesh. This is the more evident since the natural spiritual life communicated to the humanity of Christ is a figure of the divine life, as also is the supernatural spiritual life communicated to His humanity immediately at its origin and in virtue of its substantial union with God and proportioned to the same.

Although this does not constitute a formal and real resemblance in nature with the producing person, it is an outcome and reflection of this resemblance bestowed by God on the person who subsists in this humanity.

THE VIVIFYING OF THE FLESH OF CHRIST THROUGH THE INFUSION OF THE SOUL

For a better understanding of the organic side of the production of Christ and the views expressed in the Sacred Scriptures and in the Fathers, special consideration should be given to the position in this production occu-

pied by the vivification of the organically formed flesh through the infusion of the spiritual soul. The key to this consideration is given by the Apostle, who connects the words of the psalm, "This day have I begotten thee,"³⁹ with the Resurrection of Christ from the dead and always ascribes the latter to the Father, acting through the Holy Ghost.

By the production of Christ is here understood the communication of life through the influence of the soul; more correctly, the communication of the glorious, divine life through infusion of the divine, glorified soul, which in the case of all other human beings also bears the name of rebirth. In view of the fact that He is Son of God in an entirely unique manner, this communication of life is, with Christ, called production in a very special sense, since it occurs in virtue of the substantial relation of the eternal Father to the flesh of Christ through the divine seed, which placed in His flesh the person of the Logos, or inasmuch as this production is communicated and borne through this relation with the eternal Father. It thus appears as a development and extension of the eternal inner communication of life, or as its external expression and revelation. The Father communicates His life to His Son, who rests in His bosom, in order to make the Son, who exists in the assumed flesh, participate while in this flesh in the divine fullness of life of the Logos, or make this flesh itself participate in this life.

In the very resuscitation of Christ, the complete supernatural fullness of life, which in virtue of the hypostatic union is due to His flesh and reveals power of this union, is communicated through an extension of the eternal

³⁹ Ps. 2:7; cf. Acts 13:33.

communication. Hence we understand why the Apostle could find it expressed in the production of Christ by God, or, again, could particularly consider it an outcome and termination of the eternal production.

In a manner analogous to the reunion of Christ's soul with His body at the Resurrection, so at His conception was effected the creation of His soul and its union with the flesh formed by the Holy Ghost and assumed by the Logos. Through this union the flesh was originally vivified and formed to a living humanity. This act of vivifying is directly of itself a creating act of God, as was the natural origin and creation of the first man. It must also be considered a communication of life through production, so far as it is essentially directed to the production of the living flesh of the Son of God and is brought about through the substantial connection of the Son with the Father. In other words, it is an extension of the eternal communication of life originally given to the Son in the bosom of the Father and now given to the same Son as He is formed according to the flesh in the bosom of the mother.

When the very act of vivifying Christ's flesh is connected with the "overshadowing" of "the power of the Most High" as the productive power of the Father, we have the most beautiful and complete organism in the producing of Christ by the Blessed Trinity. On the other hand we obtain the richest representation of the relationship of Christ's eternal Father to His human mother. For, as the producing of the Logos Himself, so the completion of His humanity is ascribed likewise to the Father, particularly the producing of His soul in union with the Logos, to vivify the body prepared by the Holy Ghost. Here God the Father, on the grounds of His power of

production, appears as the principle of the personality and the spiritual life of the fruit produced in the mother in a much more sublime sense than the human father.

Lastly, in the case of Christ the production and infusion of the human soul is considered from the viewpoint of an extension and revelation of the internal communication of life in God. Hence the soul of Christ, which is connected in its origin with the Logos and through Him with the Father as the source of divine life, participates also by origin and nature in this life. It thus enters into the body as both naturally and supernaturally living, i.e., as the natural and supernatural image of the eternal Father.

From what has been said it follows that in the words of the angel both expressions by which he indicates the divine influence upon the producing of Christ comprise the productive action as well as the uniting action, although the words differ according to their formal contents and complete each other, forming a marvelous, complete representation. However, the productive action has a direct and special reference to the origin of Christ from the mother, the uniting action to His origin from the eternal Father.

This distinction and mutual completion also appear from the expressions which correspond to that double indication of divine influence and which indicate the specific character of the fruit of Mary. That the fruit of Mary will be essentially a "holy" one corresponds to the descent of the Holy Ghost. For in this fruit the earthly matter taken from Mary must be united with the holy substance of the Logos through the influence of the Holy Ghost, and because of this union must also be sanctified in itself. That this fruit "will be called the Son of God" or "of the Most

High" corresponds to the "overshadowing" of "the power of the Most High," inasmuch as this fruit is produced by the power of the Most High by which the Son of the Most High is brought forth from eternity.

Thus these words significantly indicate that Christ, although as man and as Christ brought forth through the influence of the Holy Ghost, is for that reason not yet His Son. The action of God *ad extra*, which reveals itself as producing and sanctifying in the origin of Christ, does not bring about independently a divine sonship of Christ. Rather this action can and must communicate merely an extension of the existing, eternal sonship to the fruit of Mary. Her holy fruit becomes Son of the Most High as a result of the sanctification of this fruit and its personal completion by the personal product of the eternal production, which originally and in itself is the Son of God.

From the whole doctrine about the supernatural origin of Christ it follows that the unique holiness of His being expressed in His very name may not be considered merely as a sanctification of the humanity already completed in nature through its union with the divine person, much less through the accidental sanctity given to it. It is found in the very composition and origin of the humanity. The constituent parts are already sanctified at their very production through the hypostatic union and, being sanctified precisely in this way, they are united to form the holy humanity.

Moreover, even the material element from which the flesh of Christ was formed possesses, even before it receives its form, a holiness such as is found nowhere else except in some degree in the forming of Eve from the

bone of Adam; for that element belonged to the holiest being after Christ.

A fortiori the supernatural production of Christ's flesh excludes its pollution by original sin. On the other hand, most superficial is the opinion advanced by Scotus, who seeks to exclude all holiness as well as all unholiness from the *materia corporis Christi* as from the earth from which Adam was formed, because this matter for the body of Christ consisted only of the blood of the mother and thus, according to his physiological theory, was never informed by the soul of Mary.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Scotus, *In 3 S.*, d. 3, q. 2

CHAPTER VI

The Virginal Motherhood

THE VIRGINAL BIRTH ¹

IN the eternal origin of the Son of God the birth from the Father coincides with His production, and hence there is only one *nativitas in utero Patris*. On the other hand, in the human production of Christ from the mother there is also a *nativitas in utero*, but in a natural way it forms only the foundation of the *nativitas ex utero*, which in short is called birth.

The supernatural influence on the birth of Christ, which the older form of the Creed expresses by the formula *natus est ex Spiritu Sancto et Maria Virgine*, certainly has reference, in the first place, to the basis of the birth of Christ in His conception or the *nativitas in utero*. According to the traditional explanation of the Church, this action must be connected with the birth *ex utero*. The latter took place through the supernatural influence of the Holy Ghost in such a manner that the bodily integrity of the mother was in no wise violated, and Mary retained her virginity in bringing forth as she did when she conceived.

Usually this distinguishing feature of the birth of Christ is determined with reference merely to the privilege of the virginity which had to be guaranteed for the mother

¹ Literature: St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 28, a. 2; with it Gregorius a Valentia and Suarez; Petavius, *Dogmata theol.*, Bk. XIV, chaps. 5-6; Franzelin, *De Verbo incarnato*, thes. 15.

and which consequently had to be kept as the natural supplement of her virginal conception. According to the Creed it must be considered a privilege which characterized the very origin of Christ, and the natural supplement of the supernatural action of the Holy Ghost and of the "power of the Most High," which determined this origin, and of the eternal Father, who worked through both and in both. The eternal Father Himself formed and vivified Christ in the bosom of the Virgin and from Himself brought forth Christ. Thus He was directly instrumental in having Christ come forth from the bosom of the Virgin in a manner harmonizing with His dignity and first origin.

Hence it follows that the supernatural form of the external origin of Christ consists in His appearance from the bosom of the mother. It corresponds with His eternal production as *lumen de lumine*, as a light poured forth into the world from the bosom of the Virgin; and his quality of *virtus Altissimi*, in the way God by His own power penetrates the limits of nature without violating them; and also the forming of His body by the Holy Ghost, who made it *corpus Verbi*, in the way spirits penetrate bodies without resistance. In this sense the Fathers therefore call the birth of Christ, and likewise His conception, a miraculous and supernatural birth, a heavenly, divine, and spiritual birth.

The first and most essential element in the supernatural birth of Christ lies in the fact that He appeared from the bosom of His mother *utero clauso et obsignato*, as He later appeared at His Resurrection *ex sepulchro clauso et obsignato*, which formed as it were His second bodily birth. As a second element, naturally consequent upon

the first, the birth of Christ was also effected without pain to the mother, just as it took place without the violation of the bodily integrity of the mother through *effractio* or *violatio claustris virginalis*. The third element lies in the fact that the birth involved for neither the mother nor the child the so-called *sordes nativitatis naturalis*. The last two points are a consequence of the first, but still find their special reasons in the dignity of the mother and in that of the child.

On the other hand the supernatural character of the birth does not exclude the fact that it took place in a natural way, inasmuch as the mother cooperated in this *naturali nisu edendi prolem*; or rather, that she herself carried out the *editio prolis* with supernatural assistance, just as the *exitus prolis ex matre* also took place in the natural way.

That Mary kept her virginity even at Christ's birth is strict dogma, and especially so is the *uterus clausus*. Some recent theologians do not sufficiently bear this in mind. It was formerly expressed in the Apostles' Creed and also in the prophecy of Isaias: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son"; it is prefigured by the "closed gate" of Ezechiel.² This is evident from the fact that Jovinianus' denial of this thesis was opposed by the Church with great firmness. The real reason for this denial was not in the vagueness of the Church's doctrine but, in spite of the great clearness of this doctrine, merely in the rationalist opposition to the miracle of the dogma.

Thus Ambrose writes to Pope Siricius in the name of the Council of Milan: "In a false sense it is related that she conceived as a virgin but did not bring forth as a virgin.

² Isa. 7:14; Ezech. 44:1 ff.

Could she, then, conceive as a virgin but not bring forth as a virgin, when conception always precedes birth? But if the doctrines of the priests are not believed, let us believe the admonitions of the angels who say: 'because no word shall be impossible with God' (Luke 1:37); let the Creed of the Apostles be believed, which the Roman Church has always kept and guarded inviolately. . . . Isaias (7:14) says that it is not only a virgin who will conceive, but also a virgin who will bring forth. Who is that gate of the sanctuary, that outward gate which looks to the east, which remains shut, and through which no man shall pass, except the God of Israel alone (Ezech. 44:2)? Is Mary not that gate through which the Redeemer entered into this world?"³ And Augustine says: ". . . that we should believe in the only begotten Son of God the Father Almighty born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary . . . and so, if her integrity was violated by His birth, then surely He was not born of the Virgin, and it would be wrong for the whole Church to profess, as it now does, that He is born of the Virgin Mary, whereas the Church itself in imitating its mother, daily begets its members, yet remains a virgin."⁴

Indeed the *natus ex Virgine* of the Apostles' Creed as well as the *Virgo pariet* of the prophet can be understood only *in sensu composito*, as is customarily said. Otherwise the connection of the virginity with the bringing forth has no longer any meaning. On this point Isaias is even more conclusive. For the prophet announces the conceiving and bringing forth by the virgin as a great sign or miracle. In the original text he also uses the participial

³ St. Ambrose, *Epist.* 42, nos. 4-5; *PL*, XVI, 1125 ff.

⁴ St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, chap. 34; *PL*, XL, 249.

construction: Behold a virgin pregnant and giving birth. The first observation makes it superfluous to express ourself regarding the philological question whether the Hebrew expression *Haalma* can mean only *virgo*. Hence we cannot say with Oswald that the Sacred Scriptures leave this question "unsolved." Oswald ignored this scriptural text no less than he did the patristic explanation of the Apostles' Creed and the vigorous opposition of the early Church against Jovinianus.

On the contrary, when St. Luke represents the offering of Jesus in the Temple as the fulfillment of the precept of Moses regarding *every male opening the womb*,⁵ we must not take these words too strictly or argue that this law was strictly applicable to Jesus. Otherwise we would have to conclude from the preceding text, in which St. Luke states that "the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished,"⁶ that Mary did not virginally conceive.

Besides the words of this text quoted by St. Luke regarding the law, many of the Fathers also speak of the *apertio vulvae* at the birth of Christ. They thus wish to stress the reality of the birth and in particular the fact that Christ was the first-born. In this sense *aperire vulvam* stands in opposition to the *claudere vulvam* of the Sacred Scriptures, but never in order to indicate the *effractio vulvae*.⁷ The Fathers who use this expression declare emphatically, sometimes by the use of the word, sometimes in other places of their works, that in the ordinary sense the *apertio vulvae* cannot be said of Mary.

Moreover, there are more witnesses for this last point

⁵ Luke 2:23; cf. Exod. 13:2.

⁶ Luke 2:22; cf. Lev. 12:2 ff.

⁷ Tertullian is an exception; see *De carne Christi*, chap. 23; *PL*, II, 790.

than for many others.⁸ Note in particular in St. Leo I: "He is conceived of the Holy Ghost within the womb of the virgin mother who brought Him forth without violation of her virginity, just as she conceived Him without violation of her virginity." The Council of Chalcedon, which accepted the letter of St. Leo, explained this in the *oratio prosphonetica* as follows: How is she the Mother of God? Because of Him who bestowed virginity upon her also after the conception and who sealed her womb as is fitting God.⁹

In the third canon of the Council of the Lateran under Martin I, it was defined: If anyone does not profess that Mary is truly and appropriately the holy Mother of God, immaculate and ever a virgin, since the Word of God is conceived of the Holy Ghost without seed and is brought forth incorruptibly, while her virginity remained intact also after the birth, let him be anathema.¹⁰

Ratramnus later held as guaranty for the reality of the birth, a literal *apertio vulvae*; at least he seems to hold this view and he was at that time thus understood by Paschasius Radbertus.¹¹ Unlike others who, probably through misunderstanding, as he thought, accepted an *exitus ex matre non per communem viam*, he wished merely to demonstrate that Christ's birth into the world,

⁸ See Gregorius a Valentia, *op. cit.* and Petavius, *op. cit.*, Leo I, *Epist.*, 28 *ad Flavian.*; *PL*, LIV, 759.

⁹ Scheeben does not give here any reference to sources. Dublanchy, art. "Marie" in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, IX, 2380, says that the Council of Chalcedon repeats merely for the virginity of Mary the general confirmation of the Creed: *natus ex Maria Virgine*. But the *virginitas in partu* is explicitly mentioned in the Tomus of St. Leo (*PL*, LIV, 757ff.), to which the Council assented unconditionally.

¹⁰ Denzinger, *Ench. symb.*, no. 256. Cf. Paul IV, *Constit.* "*Cum quorumdam*," Aug. 7, 1555; Denz., no. 993.

¹¹ Ratramnus, *De nativitate Christi*, *PL*, CXXI, 83-85. Paschasius Radbertus, *De partu Virginis*, *PL*, CXX, 1367-86.

since it had happened with the natural cooperation of the mother, had also taken place in the natural way. This is obvious from the following. His opponents who accepted another form of the bringing into the world for the sole purpose of avoiding any violation of the womb of the mother were shown by him to be absurd by the remark that in every other way a violation of the bodily integrity must take place, if one wished to regard as a violation the giving birth in the natural way.¹² Our doctrine encountered serious opponents only later in the case of heretics, namely, the Calvinists, against whom it was defended by Catholic theologians as a characteristic dogma.

The way Christ was born is by its very nature a true and sublime miracle, and has always been considered so. To facilitate belief in it, it is compared to the natural penetration of light through bodies, and to analogous supernatural effects explicitly mentioned in Sacred Scriptures, such as the coming forth of the glorified Christ from the tomb or His passage through closed doors. Both comparisons are united in the prefiguration of the burning bush which was not consumed by the fire.

To explain the miracle in greater detail it was sometimes considered to have been effected through a momentary anticipation of the gift of subtlety proper to glorified bodies. But, according to St. Thomas,¹³ this gift does not suffice of itself for the co-penetration with other bodies, and neither is it necessary. Such an anticipation should be accepted in Christ's condition of humility merely for urgent reasons. With St. Thomas we must here confine ourselves to ascribing the miracle directly to a special

¹² See Natalis Alexander, O.P., *Hist. Eccles.*, in Saec. IX, diss. 13, sec. 3.

¹³ St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 23, a. 2, ad. 3.

effect of the power of God, which substantially dwelt in the body of Christ.

Since the foundation and completion of the birth of Christ was effected under the supernatural influence of the Holy Ghost, so also we must take for granted that the virginal mother came under the special influence of the Holy Ghost during the time of *gestatio prolis in utero*. For she was active as His special instrument in the very care and development of the fruit formed by her. In the whole period of her maternal activity, which was originally started by the Holy Ghost, Mary was also continually guided and supported by Him. It is true that a special, definitely determined miraculous working of the Holy Ghost during this period is nowhere mentioned. In any case, all that belongs in the least to the *dolores* or *sordes* of natural motherhood was kept away through the influence of the Holy Ghost, during the virginal *puerperium* as well as before it.

CHAPTER VII

Mary's Perpetual Virginity¹

UNLIKE all other mothers, with whom motherhood is incompatible with virginity, the mother of the Redeemer remains a virgin consecrated to God in her very motherhood as well as in her whole life. Indeed, on account of the unique perfection of her virginity and of the unique sacredness of her person and whole being, which lays the foundation of her virginity and makes it complete, this woman must be called not merely "virgin" but specifically "the Virgin."

She had been so called already in the prophecy of Isaias regarding the mother of the Emmanuel and again in the Apostles' Creed, where the virgin is placed with the Holy Ghost as one principle of the human birth of Christ. Both texts likewise define the objective and highest form of the sacredness of Mary's person and entire being, which is the basis of her virginity. As bearer of God and instrument of the Holy Ghost she is taken possession of by God in the most sublime sense of the word and, as a chosen "spiritual vessel" and spiritual bride of God united to Him by marriage, she belongs to Him alone and without reserve.

The highest perfection of the quality of virginity, as it is contained in the Christian idea of "the Virgin," com-

¹ Literature: St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 28-29, and Suarez, *op. cit.*, disp. 5-8; St. Peter Canisius, *op. cit.*, 1, 2; Petavius, *op. cit.*, *De incarn.*, 1, 14; Trombelli, *Mariae ss. vita ac gesta*, Part I, diss. 9 and 10. Especially for Mary's marriage: Lombardus, *In 4 S.*, dist. 30; and St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure.

prises permanence. Otherwise Mary cannot be called "virgin," much less "the Virgin." She is *virgo perpetua*. This perfection of virginity comprises three essential parts: (1) bodily integrity and purity (*virginitas corporis* or *carnis*); (2) the virtue of virginity or the permanent virginal inclination (*virginitas mentis*); (3) the virginity of heart, i.e., freedom from all carnal motions and sensations (*virginitas sensus seu animae*).

Mary's perpetual virginity was denied only by those heretics who denied also the divinity of Christ, such as the Ebionites, Arians, and rationalist Protestants, or by those who display a great wantonness in the domain of morals, such as Helvidius and Jovinianus. The Reformers opposed the perpetual virginity of spirit, at least so far as the vow is concerned, and partly also the *virginitas in partu*, without denying the divinity of Christ. But they minimized the living efficacy of the divinity of Christ, even for His own humanity, and they wished to avoid in the vow of Mary the ideal of consecrated virginity.

MARY'S BODILY VIRGINITY

The absolute perfection of the bodily virginity of the mother of Jesus, with regard to that act through which she outwardly appeared as the mother of Christ, is usually thus defined: Mary was a virgin in the birth, before the birth, and after the birth. This order shows that, whereas with other mothers the violation of the bodily integrity is strikingly obvious in the birth, Mary's integrity was miraculously preserved in the birth of her Son and supposes and reflects the virginal conception of her Son. Furthermore it guarantees the perpetual continuation of her integrity to the exclusion of any other human conception.

The absolute bodily virginity can also be determined with reference to the conception which made her the mother of Christ, namely, that her virginity was not violated in, before, or after the conception of Christ. Thus it is shown that the basis of her motherhood is also the basis of her perpetual virginity, just as in the first case the external revelation of her motherhood comes to the fore as a sign and guaranty of her perpetual virginity.

This permanent and perfect virginity of the body of Mary is *de fide*, especially since the definition by the Fifth Ecumenical Council (can. 2), and by the Lateran Council under Martin I (can. 3).²

Mary's virginity as an attribute of the divine motherhood, i.e., in the conception and at the birth of Christ, has been treated before. Thus we will consider here only her virginity after the birth of Christ, since in view of the clear indication of Sacred Scriptures, her virginity before the birth of Christ was never contested.

In Holy Writ the constant and perpetual virginity is indicated merely by several details: e.g., by the mention of the vow of virginity;³ again, by the fact that Mary is always called the mother of Jesus, and that, for want of other sons, the dying Christ gave St. John to her as her adopted son and from among all His disciples chose this one who was a virgin.

More definite is tradition, in which Mary is always called simply "virgin" or rather "the Virgin." Long ago Epiphanius⁴ brought this point to bear against the Antidicomarianites. With due allowance for this fact and for

² Denzinger, nos. 214, 256.

³ See pp. 115 ff.

⁴ St. Epiphanius, *Panarion*; PG, XLII, 705-8.

the essential connection of Mary's perpetual virginity with her dignity and position, the Fathers ever treat the denial of this truth with the greatest indignation. They call this denial insane,⁵ "God's robbery";⁶ *scelus et blasphemia, caecus furor*.⁷

The intrinsic reason for the necessity of the perpetual virginity was of old based on the interpretation of the "closed gate" which Ezechiel saw and concerning which God said to the prophet: "This gate shall be shut. It shall not be opened, and no man shall pass through it: because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it."⁸

St. Thomas⁹ sets forth the absurdity of the contrary supposition under a fourfold view, each view in connection with one of the persons concerned. (1) Christ, the Son of Mary, who must be the only-begotten as well as the first-born; (2) the Holy Ghost, Mary's divine bridegroom, who must keep her as His exclusive temple; (3) Mary herself, who would have been guilty of the greatest ingratitude by forsaking her virginity; (4) Joseph, Mary's human bridegroom, who would have been guilty of the greatest temerity by violating the temple of the Holy Ghost.

The exegetical difficulties brought forward by heretics are hardly worth discussing and have been sufficiently solved by St. Jerome.¹⁰ The heretics chiefly quote from Sacred Scripture three expressions which, according to them, indicate that Mary, after the birth of Christ, had

⁵ Origen, in *Luc.* hom. 7; *PG*, XIII, 1818.

⁶ St. Ambrose, *De instit. virg.*, chap. 5; *PL*, XVI, 313.

⁷ St. Jerome, *Adv. Helvidium*, *PL*, XXIII, 195, 200.

⁸ Ezech. 44:2.

⁹ St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 28, a. 3.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*

conjugal relations with Joseph and had sons by him.

1) The expression, "And he knew her not till she brought forth her first-born son."¹¹ The merely negative implication of "not till" obviously follows from the previous statement, "and took unto him his wife." This implication even more clearly appears from the preceding text, which is likewise quoted: "before they came together she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost,"¹² although coming together does not even necessarily answer to "knowing" but rather to "taking unto him," i.e., keeping or taking home in the other text.

2) The expression "first-born son,"¹³ which St. Luke uses in reference to Christ. This by itself excludes only former sons and does not at all indicate later ones, particularly in biblical parlance, according to which the first-born (*bekhor*), precisely in that negative sense, was bearer of special rights and duties, and had to be consecrated to God.

3) The mention of several persons as "brothers of Christ." According to the Hebrew language, this expression does not require that these "brothers" should be considered children of the same parents. It is also used in a wider sense for relatives in general; e.g., Gen. 13:8, where Abraham calls Lot his brother. In fact, several of these brothers, such as James and Joseph,¹⁴ are indicated as sons of another Mary, the sister of the mother of Jesus and wife of Clopas.¹⁵ James, who particularly is mentioned as the brother of Jesus,¹⁶ is regularly named in the

¹¹ Matt. 1:25.

¹² Matt. 1:18.

¹³ Luke 2:7.

¹⁴ Matt. 27:56.

¹⁵ John 19:25.

¹⁶ Gal. 1:19.

enumeration of the apostles as the son of another father, Alphaeus.¹⁷ Clopas in St. John's Gospel¹⁸ (by mistake the Vulgate has Cleophas) and Alphaeus in the Synoptics are one and the same person. Both names rest only on a different pronunciation of the Hebrew word "Halphai." If, according to Hegesippus,¹⁹ Clopas was a brother of St. Joseph, there existed a double cousinship between Jesus and James. For the solution of this difficulty we are not at all obliged to accept, with some of the Fathers together with the Apocrypha, that the "brothers" of Jesus were sons of Joseph from a previous marriage. This was already rejected by St. Jerome.²⁰

MARY'S VIRGINITY OF SPIRIT

The perpetual virginity of Mary not only consisted in bodily integrity, but was always understood as embracing also virginity of spirit, i.e., a steadfast will to keep her bodily integrity for the honor of God. The virginal disposition after the conception of Christ is a necessary result of this conception. The absence of it would have been a lack of spiritual perfection and a grievous sin. But this responsibility did not oblige Mary before the conception of Christ. Mary did not know her sublime calling, at least not explicitly and distinctly.

On the other hand it must be supposed a priori that God prepared her for her vocation by the infusion of the

¹⁷ Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15.

¹⁸ John 19:25.

¹⁹ St. Hegesippus, *Fragm. apud Euseb.*, PG, XX, 248.

²⁰ St. Jerome, in *Matth.*, chap. 12; PL, XXVI, 84 ff.; *Adv. Helvid.*, no. 19; PL, XXIII, 203. Origen, who definitely champions the perpetual virginity of Mary (*Hom. 7 In Luc.*; PG, XIII, 1818; *In Jo.*, Bk. I, no. 6, PG, XIV, 32), is rather inclined to accept children from a first marriage of Joseph (*in Matth.*, Bk. X, no. 17; PG, XIII, 8760).

virginal inclination. But the Sacred Scriptures offer us also a positive standpoint for the fact that Mary really had this disposition in the most perfect manner. The answer to the angel: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?"²¹ does not permit any other comprehensible meaning than this, that Mary had already bound herself by vow to keep her virginity.

Here we may ask whether this vow had been conditional or unconditional, whether taken before or after her marriage; and, in the event that Mary took it before her marriage, how long it antedated that event.

According to the idea of the Church, which presents Mary as the model of all virgins, the ideal perfection of the love for virginity must be presumed in her, namely, on the ground of her vocation as Mother of God, or rather, of her consecration as bride of God solemnized by God Himself from the beginning. Having observed this fact, we must accept: (1) that this vow was simply perfect and therefore also unconditional, since there was no condition attached to it which was derogatory to the moral decision of the will; (2) that, in any case, it had been taken as soon as the question arose in Mary's soul concerning her future state of life.

1) The fact of the vow of chastity follows from Luke 1:34 so clearly that the Protestant opponents of it have to take refuge in the most insipid and contradictory subterfuges.²² Referring to this text, the early Fathers, such as Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine, have upheld the vow.²³

²¹ Luke 1:34.

²² St. Peter Canisius, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, chap. 14.

²³ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Sermo de nativ. Domini*, PG, XLVI, 1140 ff.; St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, chap. 4; PL, XL, 398.

The intrinsic possibility of the vow can be disputed only by those who either do not wish to accept virginity as a possible object of a vow, or who from a rationalist point of view completely overlook the fact that Mary has to be prepared for her sublime vocation under the guidance and enlightenment of the Holy Ghost. We know that even before the time of Christ the thought of freely chosen perpetual virginity was not strange to the Israelites, as the example of the Essenes shows; but we cannot prove or suppose that others before Mary had both made the resolution and taken the formal vow of virginity.

For this reason some of the Fathers thought that in the Old Testament the entering into marriage and its consummation were generally even commanded. This opinion, however, is based on a misunderstanding of some texts whose true implication is a promise of fecundity to the marriages of the Israelites, and also on the generalizing of a text which is not found in the Vulgate: *maledictus qui non fecerit semen in Israel*.²⁴ The latter does not mean an obligation to marriage in contrast with virginity, but to a certain marriage, namely, the levirate marriage. It need only be conceded that in the morals of the Israelites the higher appreciation of virginity does not generally find expression. In consideration of the divine decree that the Messias should arise out of Israel, the striving for the propagation of the people of God had a relative precedence over the observance of virginity.

2) The perfection of the vow. Partly because of this notion of the people of Israel, partly because of Mary's

²⁴ This text, for which Scheeben refers to Deut. 25, is not found in the Hebrew or in the LXX. It must be a gloss which crept into some manuscripts. St. Thomas, *In 4 Sent.*, d. 30, q. 2, art. 1, refers to Deut. 7:14.

subsequent marriage, some theologians²⁵ have taught that her vow was at first conditional, since she was not certain that the keeping of her virginity under all circumstances would be most pleasing to God. For that reason she should have added to it the condition: so far as God's pleasure is not otherwise.

But even if such an uncertainty is accepted, the vow loses nothing of its moral perfection. The willingness to keep her virginity is not impaired by this condition. In fact, by the conditional vow the unconditional and complete surrender to God, which forms the soul of the vow, shines still more splendidly.²⁶

Moreover, we are not compelled to accept this uncertainty. A priori the contrary must rather be presumed. This uncertainty, therefore, need not be accepted because only after entering into the engagement with Joseph could Mary be entirely certain that the steadfast observance of the vow was pleasing to God. Even before the betrothal she could have known this through divine revelation, just as she could have been certain, through such an inspiration, or even through a previous agreement with her bridegroom, that she did not expose her virginity to danger in this marriage, but rather would find a protection. Nothing refutes this presumption. On

²⁵ Cf. St. Thomas, *In 4 S.*, d.30, q.2, a.1, q1a. 1, and IIIa, q.28, a.4, referring to a remark of St. Augustine, which is quoted by Gratian (*PL*, CLXXXVII, 154) and Lombardus (*Sent.*, lib. 4, dist. 30), but which cannot be found in the writings of St. Augustine.

²⁶ Scheeben here makes the following note: It is common knowledge that it is a favorite theme of Marian preachers to find expression in the question to the angel, "How shall this be done, etc.", that Mary would have preferred her virginity even to the divine motherhood. St. Bernard (*hom.* 4, *super Missus est*, no. 3; *PL*, CLXXXIII, 80) understood the meaning of the answer quite differently; he emphasizes the complete surrendering to God which forms the soul of the vow of virginity. See Appendix 4.

the contrary it may well be presumed that Mary took the vow not only out of love for virginity in general, but also because of a clear knowledge that God had called her to take it. For otherwise this vow is usually taken with the knowledge that God will not merely accept it with complacency, but will also expect it of the person who takes it. This view must be accepted still more with regard to Mary, who was predestined by God from the beginning to be His bride and mother.²⁷

Taking these circumstances into consideration, we may say that Mary's vow eminently bears the character and force of a "solemn vow."²⁸ It included both a subjective engagement, simply accepted by God, and an objective consecration, being taken possession of by God. It is a consecration which is not consequent upon the acceptance of the vow, but which rather precedes the vow as a dedication that Mary, on her side, must accept through her vow. In other words, Mary was already a virgin consecrated to God, one whom God united to Himself in marriage. But through her vow and her own will she also entered subjectively into the relationship of the bride of God, as Eve through her consent contracted her marriage with Adam which had been decreed by God.

We may dispute the term "solemn vow." However, the matter speaks for itself. As the conception of Christ, which followed after Mary's vow, is rightly regarded as the

²⁷ For Mary's bridal relation to God, see also chap. 5.

²⁸ Scheeben follows here the idea of solemn vows which St. Thomas gives in his *Summa*; they differ from the simple vows by a sort of *consecratio* or being taken possession of by God Himself (IIa IIae, q. 88, a7), who makes them indissoluble (*ibid.*, a. 11). For this doctrine and its relation to the present ecclesiastical judicial idea, see I. Mennessier, O.P., in the French translation of the *Summa*, *La religion* (Paris, 1934), II, 423-41; Prummer, O.P., *Bull. thom.*, I-III (1924-26), no. 296; Em. Bergh, S.J., "Éléments et nature de la profession religieuse" in *Eph. th. Lov.*, XIV (1937), 5-32.

consecration of herself and her virginity, this consecration may very well be taken as a *solemnisatio voti*.

3) For the time of the vow, we must assign it to the earliest possible period of her life. Other saints have taken it in their earliest days, e.g., St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi. Sexual, bodily, or spiritual maturity is not required. The feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple likewise points to this conclusion. The chief thought and meaning of the feast is Mary's complete consecration to God.

4) As a special quality of Mary's vow, it is usually thought to have been the first ever taken. This opinion cannot positively and satisfactorily be proved. Yet it is very probable. For not only can no former vow be pointed out, but according to the concept and morals of the Israelites, who alone are here taken into consideration, such a vow is not to be presumed without reason.²⁹

MARY'S VIRGINITY OF HEART

Finally, in accordance with the mind of the Church regarding the absolutely perfect virginity of Mary, we must accept that virginity of heart, i.e., freedom from all motions and sensations contrary to purity, is an essential part of that perfect virginity. This virginity is included in the moral perfection and holiness of Mary's will. Hence this point comes under the general notion of freedom from material sins or motions of sensual concupiscence in general.

Because of the union in her of these three elements of perfect virginity, Mary is called not merely "virgin," but even "Virgin of virgins," i.e., the ideal of virginity. For a double reason she deserves this name. First of all, with

²⁹ For further details on this point, see Suarez and Trombelli.

her the love for virginity stood in direct relation to the excellent fullness of grace and love of God, through which she excels all saints. For this reason her virginity not only consists of actual integrity and immaculateness protected merely by human will, but at the same time must also be considered as the most perfect inviolability and purity. Secondly, by consecrating Mary to be His motherly bride, God bound Himself to prevent every violation and defilement of her purity and, in particular, to make the interior violation of the virginity of Mary impossible.

Mary's virginity had this characteristic, at least after the conception of Christ, as the result of the physical completion of her marriage to God. But this characteristic existed previously as well, since Mary was already married to God by His unconditional decree from the beginning, or at least was chosen and called as His bride.

MARY'S MARRIAGE AND HER VIRGINITY

In apparent contradiction to Mary's perfect virginity as a woman consecrated to God, the fact remains that, according to the Gospels, she was the wife of Joseph. On account of this fact her virginity has been disputed. But, on the contrary, her virginity and particularly her quality of virgin consecrated to God could with equal reason make it appear that her marriage to Joseph was not a true marriage. Considered carefully, the marital character of this relationship is not only not in contradiction to her quality of "the Virgin," but in miraculous harmony with it; and rightly so, since here a form of marriage is present which indeed is very peculiar, but which, far from being considered imperfect, must rather be regarded as most ideal.

First of all, the expressions of Holy Writ in which Joseph is presented as the "husband of Mary," and Mary as "the wife of Joseph," absolutely demand that the relation of Mary to Joseph be in reality a true marriage, not merely a bond of friendship or protection or a simple betrothal. According to the literal sense of their words, some of the Fathers seem to deny this fact, and instead of a marriage appear to accept a mere engagement. It can easily be proved that they had in view only the exclusion of an actual and sexually consummated marriage, or of a marriage in the ordinary form, which in every respect is incompatible with the vow and sacred state of virginity. In fact, Holy Writ itself here avoids the term "marriage" (*nuptiae*) to which the Fathers take exception, and always uses the expression *desponderi*. However, this word is not used in the wider sense of being engaged, but in the narrower sense of being married, for otherwise it could not answer to the idea of "wife of Joseph."

The possibility of a real marriage is not excluded through Mary's virginity. For the virginity of the body merely removes the actual, bodily consummation of the marriage, which supposes the latter as already existing by right. The vow and virginity of mind annul, indeed, the intention to consummate or use marriage in a sexual way, but not, for that reason, the intention to give or obtain the *jus mutuum in corpus proprium*. The latter intention can also exist in a lawful manner, when the will of the bridal couple is exclusively directed to the other blessings of marriage which are connected with their belonging to each other.

We can rather say that the state of virginity, like the vow, excludes also the possibility of the right of a legal pledging of the *jus in corpus proprium* and thus abolishes the nature of the tie proper to marriage. By state of virginity in that case is meant the characteristic of Mary as a virgin, consecrated to God. In her this characteristic is not less perfect, but rather, particularly after the conception of Christ, is undoubtedly more perfect than that which is brought about through a solemn vow. From the point of view indicated, it is beyond dispute that the mutual right to the body of the other, understood as with ordinary marriages, that is, as *jus utendi corpore alterius*, is here no more conceivable as a radical right than as an actual and formal one. Thus in the relation of Mary to Joseph the marriage tie is not entirely of the same nature as in ordinary marriages.³⁰

Even if we grant all this, a real marriage in contradistinction to every other union of two persons, still remains conceivable with Mary. This is so not only in regard to the more general idea of the oneness of man and woman, brought about through the will and power of the Creator, with the mutual rights and duties of undivided and indissoluble connection of life, but also with the more special idea of *jus in corpus alterius*. For this right is not simply excluded under every form. Not only may it be imagined as a right of disposal to beget the fruit, but also as a right of pleasure with regard to the copossession of the fruit, to be won by God. For a natural marriage the last mentioned right is dependent on the first. Nothing, however,

³⁰ This also seems to be indicated by the Fathers, when they refuse to acknowledge any *nuptiae* in the case of Mary.

prevents God from granting the last right independent of the first in a marriage, contracted only for an entirely unique end and with His special authorization.

A real marriage was necessary, under the form in which it was possible with Mary without damage to her virginity. Indeed so necessary was it that the same end for which virginity was required in Mary, namely, the worthy realization, exercise, and revelation of her divine motherhood, demanded at the same time the marriage state with the virginal mother.

Hence the contracting of her marriage must be ascribed not less to a special command and inspiration of God than was her vow of virginity. Thus it is evident that God also ensured the virginity in that marriage in a more or less miraculous manner.

Likewise it follows that Mary's authorization to contract such a marriage does not at all bear the same character as in other cases, where a virgin, dedicated to God, receives permission for this end. This means that it does not bring to the virgin in any way a release from obligations, nor a ceasing of rights on the side of God. It rather has the express end in view, to support the virgin in the fulfilling of her vocation and to protect the rights of God. For it grants to the human bridegroom only those rights which enable him to render the necessary services to the bride of God and to her divine fruit.

Lastly, it is also clear that the close relationship between Mary's marriage with her human bridegroom and her virginal motherhood must not be regarded merely as outward and accidental, but as an inner and organic one. Thus this marriage has a consecration and dignity higher than all others, and also an exceptional perfection of

marriage, that is, in relation to the two most important *bona matrimonii*; the *bonum prolis* and the *bonum sacramenti*.

As for the *bonum prolis*, this marriage was, not less than any other, intended by God who made it, and therefore fundamentally and essentially to make possible a receiving of the fruit. Over every other virginal marriage it possesses this privilege, that it shares with a consummated marriage without damage to its virginity the blessing of fruitfulness. For in this marriage a fruit had really to be given to the married couple and put under their charge. Although the fruit was not produced through the carnal use of the marriage by husband and wife, it still had to belong to both according to the decree of the divine Father, by virtue of the spiritual unity of husband and wife, just as the natural fruit of a marriage usually belongs to them.

This marriage possesses still another privilege above every non-virginal marriage: the fruit of it is entirely and essentially holy; and at the same time husband and wife have cooperated in a higher manner by their common and virginal surrender to God to win the fruit than is the case through carnal relations with regard to a natural fruit.

The *bonum sacramenti* directly defines in marriage the bond which, according to its nature, is elevated above all other unions among men. This consists in the fact that a person is so connected with or so bound to another by the will of God that they form one indissoluble whole, and in and through it, as an instrument belonging to God, are taken possession of by God Himself for the joint achievement of a service.

The perfection of this bond is thus the higher according as the service of God, to which the one person is united with the other, is holier; and the belonging to God, in virtue of which the one person elevates the other, is more sublime. Thus the relationship of Joseph to Mary incomparably excels in both respects not only the natural marriage before and apart from Christianity, but also the other Christian marriages. It exceeds them in the same measure as the production and care of Christ is a higher design than that of mere human beings who must become members of Christ, and as Mary is an instrument belonging to God and a member of Christ in a manner more sublime than any other human being who is ordained by baptism to be an instrument of God and member of Christ.

It cannot be said here, as with a marriage of two Christians, that each party is sanctified by the other. The higher sanctity, previously mentioned, of the marriage tie of Joseph and Mary does not suffer under it, for it is thus solely because Mary cannot receive her ordination as Mother of God through marriage with a human bridegroom: here the marriage had rather to derive its higher ordination from the highest ordination of the woman, independent of the bridegroom.

The often repeated expressions, ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς, γυνὴ αὐτοῦ, are decisive for the reality of the marriage of Mary and Joseph. The Vulgate translates γυνὴ sometimes by *uxor*, sometimes by *conjux*.³¹ The expressions are clear and do not allow another meaning.

According to this, we must explain the other term,

³¹ Matt. 1:16, 19 (*vir*); Luke 2:5 (*uxor*); Matt. 1:20, 24 (*coniux*).

μνηστεύεισα, *desponsata*,³² with which Mary is indicated after, as well as before, the "acceptation" by Joseph. This verb can, indeed, mean a mere engagement, but does not possess that meaning exclusively. It is used rather in the sense of being married. Hence the exact translation is not "betrothed," but "married," i.e., bound by marriage.

The given expression has, according to its nature, the tendency to show formally the marriage relationship according to its spiritual and ethical side, as *matrimonium ratum*. It is also used in Scripture with regard to Mary in three texts in a restrictive sense for *matrimonium pure ratum*, to indicate the exclusion of carnal relations, more correctly, to throw the right light upon Mary's conception and pregnancy as supernatural in contrast to her relationship to Joseph.

We cannot discover any reason why the marriage of Mary and Joseph had not already taken place before the conception of Christ, since, before as well as after, Mary is usually called μνηστεύεισα, even on the occasion of the journey to Bethlehem. In that passage the Vulgate translates it *uxor*. All who accept a real marriage with Mary regard it as lawfully solemnized by that time.

Moreover, in Joseph's deliberation with the angel about the "taking unto him his wife," it is not excluded, but supposes that Mary was already "the wife of Joseph," thus united to him through marriage. Yet the "taking unto him," which followed later, is the only positive indication from which it could be concluded that the marriage was solemnized after the conception of Christ. To explain the scriptural text, we need not even have recourse to the

³² Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:27; 2:5.

fact that with the Jews there was not such a sharp line drawn between engagement and marriage as in Christianity.

As to the possibility of a real marriage, those theologians who stress the fact that the preceding vow of Mary was made conditionally, also hold that, with the contracting of her marriage, she had the conditional will to make the use of marriage possible if God so wished it. But this conditional will is not necessary for the validity of the marriage.

The reasons why marriage was fitting for Mary are listed by St. Thomas.³³ He mentions twelve reasons, according to these three categories: in relation to Christ, to Mary, and to us. As to the text of the Gospel, these reasons seem partly to require that the real marriage, and not the simple engagement, already existed at the time of the conception of Christ. They seem further to require, particularly for the complete safeguarding of Mary's honor, that the external cohabitation of husband and wife should have also already begun before the conception. In any case no definite and intrinsic reason can be advanced for the opposite.

We may regard as conclusive the reason by which this meaning is confirmed: the angel's admonition to Joseph "to take unto him Mary his wife" and the following mention that the command was obeyed. For this "taking unto him" stands in contrast to the previously mentioned "to put away." As this latter expression indicates a living together as already in existence, the former can also be understood as the abandoning of the idea of sending

³³ St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 29, a. 1.

away, or the firm resolution to live together continually.³⁴

As for the perfection of this marriage, read the text of St. Thomas, where he explains how the *proles* is truly a *bonum matrimonii* here.³⁵

Generally, even with ordinary marriages their relationship to the "fruit" is better and more ideally expressed through *susceptio prolis per Deum* (on behalf of God),³⁶ than through the joint procreation. Thus the child is marked as the fruit of the divine blessing, from which its soul originates, and the productive function of the parents is considered in its relation of service to the divine cooperation. From this point of view and for this reason the child in ordinary marriage is first given and appropriated by God to the mother, and by the mother to the father, and this not only for the sake of the physical influence of the father upon the production of the child, but at the same time by virtue of the father's corporeal proprietorship of the mother, or also in virtue of the unity of both.

As from this point of view the perfection of the marriage between Mary and Joseph remained more easily safeguarded, the real form also of this marriage is an instructive example for the ideal view of marriage in general.

From it, finally, there follows a deeper understanding of the paternity of St. Joseph. It is certainly more than a merely apparent paternity in the form of guardianship or

³⁴ For the opposite opinion, see Caietanus M. Perrella, "B.V.M. cum coelestem excepit nuntium, S. Joseph sponsalibus solum non vero nuptiis iuncta erat" in *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza), XXXV (1932), 378-98; 519-31.

³⁵ St. Thomas, *In 4 Sent.*, dist. 30, q. 2, a. 2 ad 4.

³⁶ Cf. Gen. 4:1.

adoption. For it rests upon the perfection of the marriage of Joseph with the bodily mother of the child.³⁷

It is not dogmatically established and can therefore not be so defined that Joseph, as well as Mary, had always been a virgin before and after the solemnizing of their marriage. It certainly may be presumed, partly from the sublime vocation of Joseph and the analogy with the virginal disciple who was assigned a similar and close relationship to Christ and Mary, partly from the fact that the virginal marriage of Joseph with Mary required from him also a vow of virginity. The latter then indicates a virginal inclination which ruled his whole life.

Whereas many of the Fathers, the larger number Greek, but some also Latin, have not acknowledged the perpetual virginity of Joseph, since they ascribed to him sons of a former marriage, they did this chiefly because they thought this supposition could explain more easily "the brothers of Jesus." This opinion finds an actual motive in the Apocrypha only. These, however, partly denied the marriage of Joseph with Mary, for which precisely his virginity was required. According to them, he was merely appointed as protector of Mary. For the rest, Jerome already strongly defended the perpetual virginity of St. Joseph.³⁸

The best that can be theologically defined with more or less trustworthiness regarding the dignity, position, and qualities of St. Joseph, is found in Saurez,³⁹ with whom the better ascetical writers of modern times agree.

³⁷ See Suarez, *op. cit.*, disp. 8, sert. 1.

³⁸ See references quoted under note 20.

³⁹ *Op. cit.*

The blind zeal of some modern pious writers is deserving of serious disapproval, for they exaggerate both the likeness of St. Joseph to Mary and the authority of his paternity toward Jesus. In regard to the first, one writer has even envisioned an immaculate conception for St. Joseph, and this is at least implicitly supposed in certain pictures and representations, which unite the heart of St. Joseph with that of Jesus and Mary. Such pictures and images were therefore rightly condemned by the Holy See.⁴⁰ Concerning the second point, the authority of Joseph toward Christ, an analogous explanation is fitting.

⁴⁰ Rescr. S. Congr. Ind., February 19, 1879.

CHAPTER VIII

The Divine Motherhood¹

THE DOCTRINE

FAITH teaches that Christ, in particular the human Christ, truly and really brought forth from a human mother, is as much the son of a human mother as is every other human son. Notwithstanding the supernatural origin of His person, a true and real human sonship is due to Christ.

Because of the maternal principle which actually participates in the production, this human sonship of Christ and also the motherhood corresponding to it must even be called natural, for, so far as the producing of the human nature and its communication to the person of Christ through conception and birth are concerned, everything is positively accomplished from the mother's side, which she does in a natural way in the production of her child.

With regard to the virginity of the maternal production and the pre-existence of the personal principle of Christ, His human sonship differs from the natural sonship of other human beings essentially in this, that no human fatherhood corresponds to it. It thus forms exclusively a relationship with a maternal principle.

¹ Literature: Peter Lombardus, *Sent.*, 1.3, dist. 4, 5, 8; with it St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas; St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 35; with it Gregorius a Valentia and Suarez; Petavius, *op. cit.*, 1.5, c. 14 ff.; Thomassinus, *op. cit.*, 1.3, c. 15; Ludov. Le Grand, *De incarn. Verbi divini* (reprinted in Migne, *Curs. theol.*, Vol. IX), diss. 4, c. 2, a. 2.

In Scripture, Christ is indeed pictured as son of the forefathers of Mary (e.g., David), and these, therefore, as His forebears; but, with Christ, this sonship differs essentially from that of other human beings. With them it includes a continuation of the paternal influence, culminating in the origin of the son, who depends on it in his entire existence. The sonship of Christ maintains relations with the forefathers through His virginal mother only, and thus it imprints on the ancestral descent the character of a mere maternal relation. It brings Christ in relation to His forefathers to the extent only that the substance of His body is taken from them. Through His supernatural conception in Mary, He is given to them in a higher sense than children brought forth in a natural manner: He is their son, conceived through their longing and their faith in the divine promises.

The result of this circumstance—which is not the case with a natural sonship—is that the human sonship of Christ can be and is extended to the whole of mankind. For mankind forms, with the first ancestor of Christ (who is also ancestor of all) one whole from which the substance of the body of Christ is taken. In Adam, Christ was also given to the whole of mankind as the longed-for, promised, and expected son, in the sense of the prophecy of Isaias: “A child is born to us, and a son is given to us.”² In this manner Christ, precisely on account of His supernatural origin, is even pre-eminently the son of man, as Adam is pre-eminently the father of mankind.

According to the explicit dogma of the human sonship of Christ, it is to be further defined and explained thus: that it simply must be ascribed not only to Christ, or to

² Isa. 9:6.

the man Christ, but to the Logos incarnate, i.e., the divine person of the Logos, as to its subject. Therefore, according to the dogma it can and must also be said truly and really: the divine Logos incarnate is the maternal product of Mary, i.e., conceived by her and born of her; consequently He is her Son, and she is His mother, as it is said of other mothers that they are the mothers of human sons.

This truth lies immediately, through simple analysis and necessary deduction, in the other truth that Christ is the son of Mary. For, Christ is no other being than the *compositum* of the Word incarnate, no other than the incarnate and divine person of the Logos, or the man personally constituted by the Logos. His production cannot, indeed, be that of the person of Christ, without it being the production of the divine person of the Logos in the flesh, or in His personal identity with the man personally constituted by the Logos.

The production of Christ would not, then, be truly and really the production of the divine person of the Logos, were Christ not truly and substantially the same person as the divine person of the Logos; or again, had He come into being as a mere man to be later united, in whatever way, to the Logos, and had He not, vice versa, come into being through the incarnation of the Logos.

In reality the Nestorians denied the human birth and sonship of the Logos, precisely because they denied the identity of the person of Christ with the Logos. On the contrary, on the Catholic side man premised the human birth and the sonship of the divine Logos, just as the corresponding title in Mary of "Mother of God," as a neces-

sary and correct expression for the divinity of the man Christ.

To express the sublime and exceptional nature of this motherhood, the term *Χριστοτόκος* (*Christipara*) can also be formed. This word was purposely made by the Nestorians as a shibboleth of their heresy and is therefore rejected by holy Church as suspicious. The Church uses the term *Theotokos* (*Deipara*), "Mother of God," as a technical expression for the sublime and entirely personal nature of Mary's motherhood. The Latin Fathers and councils usually render *Θεοτόκος* as *Dei genitrix*, while the Greeks seldom use the analogous expression *Θεογεννήτωρ*. Indeed, the latter term does not give so clearly as *Dei genitrix* the maternal character of the production, and is therefore not as appropriate as the first one.

The dogmatic definition of *Θεοτόκος* on the ground of the maternal production of the *Θεὸς Λόγος σαρκωδείς* from Mary, is found in the first canon of the Council of Ephesus,³ the sixth canon of the Fifth Council,⁴ and the third canon of the Lateran Council in 649.⁵ In the last two canons it is also explained that the name *Θεοτόκος* should be understood, not *καταχρηστικῶς* (*abusive*), but *ἀληδῶς* and *κυρίως* (*vere et proprie*) in the following sense. (1) The man brought forth from Mary is truly and really God, not merely according to the name and figuratively, as the Nestorians said. He did not later become God, but came into existence in His very origin as God. (2) Vice versa, the incarnate God is truly and really brought forth

³ Really the first Anathematismus of St. Cyril of Alexandria. Cf. Denzinger, no. 113, with the note at that place.

⁴ Second Council of Constantinople (553), Denzinger, no. 218.

⁵ Denzinger, no. 256.

from Mary, not only according to the name and figuratively, as the Nestorians said, i.e., through attributing to God the production of a human being normally united with God.

Facundus Hermianensis says: "If God is truly man, and truly man not otherwise than by being born of the Virgin, why cannot God be said to be truly born of the Virgin? And if, strictly speaking, God became man, and became man not otherwise than by being born of the Virgin, why cannot He be said also strictly to be born of the Virgin?"⁶ Many Fathers connect otherwise the *veritas* of the *generatio* and of the *maternitas Dei* with the maternal co-operation of Mary at the birth of Christ; the *proprietas*, on the other hand, with the fact that Christ is really God. This, however, does not coincide with the trend of thought of the Fifth Council.

In Sacred Scripture we do not find the expression "Mother of God," not to mention the expression Θεοτόκος. But apart from their entire doctrine concerning the being and origin of Christ, they formally contain also all the elements included therein. (1) In the prophecy of Isaias and the declaration of the angel: that which is conceived and born of Mary, will be the "Emmanuel" ("God with us") and "Son of God."⁷ (2) In the words of the Apostle: the Son of God was made and brought forth of Mary.⁸ (3) In the salutation of Elizabeth: Mary is greeted as "the Mother of the Lord."⁹

In tradition,¹⁰ long before the Council of Ephesus,

⁶ Facundus Hermianensis, *Pro defens. trium capit.*, c. 4; *PL*, LXVII, 546.

⁷ Isa. 7:14; Luke 1:35.

⁸ Rom. 1:3; Gal. 4:4.

⁹ Luke 1:43.

¹⁰ For this see A. Janssens, *Theotocos* (Brussels, 1928), II, pp. 106-93.

mention was often made of a "second production, in time," of the God-Logos by Mary. In the Apostles' Creed this is consequently connected with the Son of God as directly as with Christ. Even the expression Θεοτόκος was already in use long before. Julian the Apostate reproached the Christians with not ceasing to call Mary "Mother of God";¹¹ and Gregory Nazianzen had already pronounced anathema against the opponents.¹²

The people of Antioch, who in the beginning were friends of Nestorius, in their letter to Nestorius before the Council of Ephesus testified concerning the numerous examples in which this expression appears in the more ancient tradition: "A word which has often been used, written, and pronounced by many Fathers do not thou find hard to employ nor proceed to reject a word which expresses a pious and correct notion of the mind. For this word *theotokos* none of the Church doctors ever rejected. But those who have used it are found to be both numerous and truly renowned, and even those who did not use it never insinuated any error in those who did. For, if we do not accept what is proposed by the meaning of the term, we proceed to fall into the most profound error; nay, we actually deny the inexplicable economy of the only-begotten Son of God. Indeed, if this word is taken away, or rather the notion of this term repudiated, it immediately follows that He is not God. We expose ourselves to no danger when we feel and speak those things which we know for certain that the most celebrated doctors of the Church of God have felt and thought."¹³

¹¹ See St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Contra Julianum*, PG, LXXVI, 901.

¹² St. Gregory Naz., *Epist.* 101 *ad Cledon.*, no. 1: PG, XXXVII, 177-80. See the texts referred to in Petavius, *Dogm. theol.*, c. 14 and 15.

¹³ St. John of Antioch, *Epist.* 1 *ad Nestorium*; PG, LXXVII, 1456.

It is, therefore, entirely unwarranted that Cyril is introduced as the originator of the term Θεοτόκος. It can be attributed only to absent-mindedness, that the otherwise excellent Ephraem of Antioch has even held that Leo I claimed this expression as decisive.¹⁴

Against this doctrine the Nestorians raised the point that the production of a divine person by Mary necessarily also includes the producing of the divine person by itself, or even of the divine nature out of Mary. As Cyril remarks, this objection is refuted by the fact that even the production of the natural man does not include on the part of the mother the producing of all that forms the whole man, e.g., the spiritual soul. It might rather be said that the production of God out of Mary includes at least that the divine person received existence first in consequence of His production. For in this way man in general and the soul in particular comes into existence in the natural and human procreation; not, indeed, through the sole activity of the producing principles, but still only on account of these and in consequence of them.

So far as here the issue would be a paternal production, this thought would certainly be more obvious, but the fact that the human production precisely in its nature is a communication of the human nature, would, even in that case, point to this, that the divine person is the object of the production, not according to His divine being, but only according to the human nature which had to be given to Him. Here, however, the issue at hand is a maternal production, which essentially is directed merely to aid a person whose existence was determined from

¹⁴ St. Ephraem of Antioch, *Fragmenta*; PG, LXXXVI, 2103-10 (the text to which Scheeben alludes is not found in it). Cf. Dublanchy, art. "Marie" in *Dict. théol. cath.*, IX, 2351-55.

elsewhere in the bringing about of his human existence. In our case the *generatio Dei* especially rests on the *conceptio-susceptio Dei*, which, according to the Apostle, depends upon a *missio Filii Dei*.¹⁵ There will be more about this subject in what follows.

No one need fear that the honor of God and Christ will be infringed by the stressing of Mary's divine motherhood. But great danger threatens the honor of Christ, where His mother is not gladly and loudly proclaimed Mother of God. As the Nestorians opposed this title because they did not acknowledge Christ as true God, so Protestantism has slowly lost the full knowledge of the divinity of Christ because it refused to Mary the honor which is due to the Mother of God, supposedly for the sake of God and Christ.

The dogmatic meaning of the idea of the divine motherhood of Mary is the greater, because, as the Fathers often elucidate, Θεοτόκος has, for the entire doctrine of the being of Christ, a meaning as well-balanced and conclusive as ὁμοούσιος has for the doctrine of the divine Logos and of the entire Trinity. Ὁμοούσιος presents the Logos as a person, distinct from the Father, yet identical with Him in being, and it thus contradicts Sabellianism and Arianism. Θεοτόκος characterizes Him, whose mother is Mary, at the same time as true God and as true man, and indeed as a man consubstantial with other people. Hence it is directed against Eutychianism and Apollinarianism as well as against Nestorianism.¹⁶

As the human sonship of the Logos or of God is for-

¹⁵ Gal. 4:4.

¹⁶ See St. John Damascene, *De fide orth.*, Bk. 3, chap. 12; *PL*, XCIV, 1028-32; Petavius and Thomassinus, *op. cit.*

mally based upon the supernatural realization of the production of Christ by Mary, notably on the reception of the Logos or of God in the womb of Mary, it is not allowable to extend it without reason to the ancestry of Mary. One cannot, for instance, say that the Logos is the grandson of Anna or of David or, vice versa, that Anna is the grandmother and David the ancestor of God. At the very least one should have to add "according to the flesh,"¹⁷ which is not necessary with Mary. But even at that, these expressions are not at all becoming. They seem to lower the divine person to a common link in the chain of posterity to a human ancestor, while the virginal motherhood raises Mary herself above the rank of common mothers. The Church has never made use of such expressions. It is true that some Greek Fathers call David *θεοπάτωρ*,¹⁸ but this should rather be excused than imitated.

CLOSER INSPECTION OF THE HUMAN MOTHERHOOD

To clear away all difficulties and to exclude at the same time and often noticeable diminishing of the idea of the human sonship of God and of the divine motherhood of Mary, one must enter further into the being and the condition of the sonship and this motherhood. This can be fruitfully done only if first we fully elucidate the idea of the natural and human motherhood.

Repeating our former remarks,¹⁹ we elucidate the following for the present purpose. Before everything else, we must remark that the theologians as a rule speak, not

¹⁷ Rom. 9:5.

¹⁸ Cf. Joh. Gaspar Suicerus, *Thesaurus ecclesiasticus e patribus graecis ordine alphabetico exhibens quaecumque phrases, ritus, dogmata, haereses et huiusmodi alia spectant*, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1682; sub verbo *Δαβὶδ*.

¹⁹ See *supra*, pp. 38 ff.

only of the term of the relation of the motherhood, but also of the term of the producing activity which underlies the relation. For they indicate what is produced, not as a product or object of the production, but as its *terminus*.

This manner of speaking, first of all, offers the advantage that it places the activity underlying motherhood in a closer and more formal relation to the latter. At the same time the misunderstanding is avoided from the start, that "what is brought forth" would only be this and only so far as it comes about through the production alone or is its effect. The "term" of production means only that the producing activity maintains relation with what is called "term": either it produces this "term" or merely cooperates in its production: it either gives it an existence or communicates that "term" to a subject.

Motherhood, like paternity, refers in the strict sense of the word not to any given being, but to a personal being, who owes his existence to the producing activity of the mother. It differs essentially from paternity inasmuch as the producing activity underlying it bears the character only of a subordinate cooperation, and indeed of a material one. It consists in the offering of the matter which must be formed into a personal being, or in such a being. Connected with it is the fact that motherhood has essential reference to a "compound" personal being as the *terminus relationis*. It refers to a spiritual being only so far as the latter constitutes the formal principle within a material being, or is possessor of a material nature.

The conditions of motherhood are realized in the natural order with the maternal production in human nature. But here precisely it offers a double point of view from which motherhood, and the maternal process too, can be

considered in contrast with man. It answers to the double understanding of the personal *hypostasis*, or the personal *suppositum*, as *res naturae* and as *persona*.

With man, motherhood can first of all be considered from the point of view which man has in common with all other living products of nature, that is, as a relation of the maternal principle to its "fruit," i.e., to a material and living being which is formed of the mother, since it comes of her and proceeds from her. From this point of view the man produced constitutes the term of the relation of the motherhood so far as he is an *animal rationale*, i.e., a natural being, completed through a spiritual principle. Thus he is also the term of the maternal process, so far as the latter materially cooperates in the bringing about of this natural being.

By this is not meant that anything which can be considered in one way or another as "fruit," and in this sense as "something produced," is also brought forth, so that it should be the "term" of the motherhood. To this it is especially necessary that the fruit produced be an independent and living being. This condition is lacking in the fruits of a plant so long as they remain connected with the mother plant, and also in all parts of an organism produced from that organism. It is also lacking in that fruit which is brought forth only as a part, or as a form of being, of a being which is separated from the maternal principle, e.g., in a human body.

Theologians call the independent being which proceeds from the production, *terminus completus generationis*, the part, or the form of being, of this being which is brought about through the material cooperation of the mother, *terminus incompletus*, or *terminus formalis gen-*

erationis. St. Thomas,²⁰ on the other hand, called the independent being proceeding from the production, *subjectum generationis*, because this is the subject or bearer of the form of being, communicated through the production. He called the form of being itself simply *terminus generationis*.

Consequently that fruit only is "brought forth," in the sense of *correlativum* of the motherhood, which can be called "child," in Latin approximately but not entirely identical with *proles*, *natus*, *genitus*.

Just as for this reason the fruit, not in the merely vegetable kingdom, but first in the animal kingdom, becomes in one way or another *correlativum* of motherhood, it is this, in this respect, first entirely in the human domain: here alone motherhood constitutes a relation between two personal beings.

The idea of "fruit" in general and of "child" in particular does not require that with a human being the principle of life and subsistence in the product be brought over by the mother. Nor is it thereby brought to the foreground or formally supposed that the principle of life and subsistence in the product has a proper and spiritual subsistence of its own, in virtue of which the *terminus formalis* of the production passes into this principle and is appropriated to it in such a way that it comes under the latter's rule. This principle rather appears here as a mere completion or completing form in the *compositum* of the fruit or of the child. In a word, when that which is produced with human beings is considered from the viewpoint of "fruit" and "child," which it has in common with other natural beings, the proper relations between form

²⁰ St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 35, a. 1 corp.

and matter are, with man, in that case not expressed as such.

When the proper relation of man toward other natural beings is taken into account, motherhood as well as maternal production may be considered in man under a proper point of view, since, directly and formally, both refer to man as a person, or with regard to his personality. Formally considered as a person and according to his personal function, man is *spiritus habens carnem per ipsum animatam*. From this viewpoint he is to the mother not as her fruit, but as something which is given her by God, which she clothes with her flesh, or to which she communicates and appropriates her flesh, and with which she herself is connected through this communication. Hence the producing activity of the mother is to him not simply a cooperation in the bringing about of a being, but a cooperation in the material forming and the bringing into the world of a spiritual being that has proceeded from God.

Precisely where motherhood is taken as a perfect and proper motherhood, or as a personal relation between persons, the producing activity of the mother, on which it is based, does not appear as the production of the person, but, under the form of *concupere* and *parere*, it rather formally supposes, on the part of the mother, the higher origin of the person. Thus the "producing" is nothing but the "bringing something to the outside," something which is given to the mother and is received in her. Particularly fitting are the expressions *προψέρειν*, *edere*, as used by the Fathers in relation to the Logos, while *παράγειν*, as *producere* and our "to produce," has exclusively the meaning of achieving.

"The son" or "the produced one" differs from "child" in this, that the first indicates "what is produced" as altogether equal to the father and hence as "personal" in general, and also as "entirely" personal, i.e., not destined by nature to be subordinate to any other person. Thus it is the purely complete or ideal term of the motherhood. Consequently this expression entirely represents the *correlativum* of the motherhood or the *subjectum generationis* from the viewpoint here considered. For it represents this subject as one not only that is independent, but that is independent "as person," and rightly so, in contrast to the producing activity of the mother, formally as a subject which appropriates and takes possession of the formal contents of this activity. Thus the contrast between the *subjectum* and the *terminus formalis generationis* is much more sharply accentuated than from the first viewpoint.

This second consideration, under which the term of motherhood and of maternal production can be considered in human beings, is usually not elucidated expressly by the theologians, neither is it by St. Thomas. By the latter, and also by many other theologians, it is casually expressed in connection with the motherhood of Mary. Indeed, with the natural man the second viewpoint does not find a completely pure and perfect expression. It is thoroughly mingled with the first one and changed by it. For as part of nature, the personal principle in that which is produced is here of itself not a complete person. Further, it simply does not exist before the producing activity of the mother and it is not the *primum conceptum* which underlies this entire activity, but it first comes into existence as part of the fruit.

This indeed is the reason why we can say that with man the mother receives and brings into the world a human person, but not that she conceives and produces a human spirit, although the person as person, or the proper "I," lies in the spirit of man. But in order to maintain and to explain fully that the human mother is really and truly, formally and directly, the mother of the person with whom she is connected through her production, this second viewpoint must be brought forward with the natural man. And the more because otherwise the most important element in the divine motherhood of Mary would be without a natural analogon.

Indeed, with regard to the supernatural motherhood, the first point of view is not excluded either. For Christ is not the "Son" of Mary in such a way that He is not at the same time her "fruit." He could not even be the former if He were not the latter. Both viewpoints stand here in a reverse relation to that of other people. The relation of the son exists here wholly pure and perfect through the pure union of person, of the "flesh" with the "spirit." The relation of the fruit is so altered by it that the principle which constitutes the person is not included in the living flesh as a direct principle of life, but only completes it through a higher and holy existence.

The application of this distinction to Christ is anticipated in Sacred Scripture, where Isaias indicates Christ as *fruit of the earth* and *bud of the Lord*, and says of Him: "A child is born to us, and a son is given to us."²¹

²¹ Isa. 4:2; 9:6.

THE APPLICATION TO THE MOTHERHOOD OF MARY

Observing these remarks, we may consider the motherhood of Mary in the relation to Christ or to the incarnate Word in a two-fold manner: according as we regard Him as the fruit of Mary's womb, or as her child, and in a strictly personal form, as her Son.

Under the first aspect, Christ must be regarded as *ἄνθρωπος θεωθεύς* in the sense of the Greek Fathers, and as such He is indeed represented in the expression of the angel: "the Holy, which shall be born of thee."²² Under the second aspect, He must be considered as the *θεὸς ἀνθρωπίνης* of the Greek Fathers, and as such He appears in the expression of the prophecy which characterizes the son of the Virgin as "Emmanuel."²³

A closer inspection of both these viewpoints will not only show in general that the motherhood of Mary, like her maternal activity, has really and truly its term in a man who is truly and really God. Sometimes also it will exclude the more or less clearly expressed thought that, strictly speaking, it should be said: Mary is the mother of a man who is God at the same time; as if her maternal activity, immediately and directly, formally and of itself, were directed only to the human part in Christ and only mediately and indirectly, materially and *per accidens*, to the divine part.

However enchanting this thought may appear, it detracts too much from the motherhood of Mary. For this latter would differ, with regard to its term, not intrinsically and essentially, but merely externally and acci-

²² Luke 1:35.

²³ Isa. 7:14.

dently, from the common, human motherhood. On the contrary, it will become clear that Mary's motherhood has directly and formally as term the God-man as such; and precisely with the strictly personal concept of this relation, this term must simply be called "God," as occurs also in the name Θεοτόκος.

From the first point of view, where Christ is considered "fruit" and "child" of the mother, He is considered first and foremost in the capacity of a human being. But this human being is fully the "fruit" of the production and really "child," only inasmuch as He is an independent being. Since the principle of His existence is divine, He is only as divinely existing the real "child" of His mother.

Hence Mary is really and truly the mother of a "divine" child, i.e., a child subsisting in a divine person; or as the angel, with regard to the holy character of the divine personality, calls it, a "holy child," a "holy fruit," not less than a natural mother is mother of a spiritual living child.

Consequently Mary's maternal activity is directed to the production of a really holy fruit, at least as distinctly and formally as that of ordinary mothers is to the production of a mere human one. The tendency of this activity is a merely cooperative one and as such it is directed according to the striving of the principal agent, under whose influence the cooperating agent works. Under the supernatural influence of God, the maternal activity of Mary was as distinctly and formally directed to the union of the flesh given by her with the divine Logos (principle of His hypostatic completion), as the cooperation of another mother is, under the influence of a man, directed to the

union of the flesh with a spiritual soul. But, unlike the case in a natural production, here the union of the flesh with its subsistence was immediately brought about by the same influence which gives the motherly activity its direction. Thus the union of the flesh, taken of Mary, with the Logos *ordine naturae* even precedes the union with the spiritual soul which vivifies it.

It is entirely wrong, therefore, to represent with the Scotists and Vasquez the maternal cooperation of Mary as if by itself it were directed merely to the bringing about of the human nature of Christ, or of a mere human being, to be later the God-man, who came about through the union of this human nature with the divine person. This could be true only had Mary conceived, not from the Holy Ghost, but from a human father; or when "the conception by the Holy Ghost" did not include the divine person of the Logos as first and proper contents of the conception.

On the other hand, according to the teaching of the Fathers,²⁴ the foundation of Mary's maternal activity with the coming into being of Christ, was the conception of the Logos as a *semen divinum*. It is thus from the beginning intrinsically and essentially directed not to the production of a mere human being, that rather for this very reason it is directed to the coming into existence of a man, because it is directed to the God-man.

As Mary's maternal activity aims directly at producing as fruit a divinely subsisting human being, it is also directed to bring forth such a fruit, which by itself is a divine person through her participation in the subsistence

²⁴ See *supra*, pp. 84 ff.

of a divine person. The aim, then, is as truly the "being God" of the human being as it has his "being man" as results.

From the second point of view, where Christ is considered as a son, given by God to His mother, this son first and foremost appears as the God-Logos who is the eternal God and the only Son of God; and precisely as such He became directly and formally the term of the Mary's maternal activity, not less, but rather more than a mere human son.

For the eternal God-Logos appears here precisely as contents and object of the conception from the mother's side inasmuch as He assumes His flesh of her and in her; and indeed so as first and most direct contents of the conception. Likewise He comes by Himself to the fore as the direct end of the mother's activity of producing and bringing forth, so far as this is entirely directed to clothe Him and Him alone with the flesh, or to develop and to form fully the flesh belonging to Him, or still further to form Him in that flesh as in His own flesh.

Consequently the relation of the divine motherhood refers here directly and formally to the divine person of the Logos, so far as He is the very bearer of the flesh taken of the mother. This is true still more, since in Christ the divine person is the only and adequate principle of His subsistence, and as bearer of the human nature He loses nothing of His complete independence, but rather in it He shows His complete and highest independence.

Therefore as the person of Christ, formally considered, is purely divine and not human, not even divine and human, neither can the motherhood in His regard be called

a divine and human one, which indeed is never heard of. It must be clearly marked as a divine motherhood.

Likewise it is not a mere rhetorical figure; rather is it a more or less audacious figure of speech, when Mary is called "Mother of the Word." For that very reason rather the real term of the motherhood is elucidated, and this very motherhood is characterized as a spiritual relation to a person, of itself divine.

In connection with the latter point a modern theologian remarks: "As the mother of Christ has not formally and directly ²⁵ a part in the eternal and spiritual origin of the Logos, and the name 'Mother of the Logos' might seem to insinuate such a thing, we had better refrain from its use, since it is little or seldom used in prayer formulas of the Church. Yet, in the sense of *mater ejus qui est Verbum*, it does not deserve disapproval. That it can also be used in some cases without too much objection, is shown by the *Memorare* of St. Bernard." ²⁶ The objection, raised here, is already solved. It should, moreover, be remembered that the expression Θεὸς Λόγος is repeatedly used for the term of the motherhood of Mary by the Fathers and in the councils. The same objection should be raised as well against the expression *Mater Dei* or *Mater Filii Dei*.

The Fathers even note the direct relation of the motherhood and maternal activity to the divine person as a divine person to the extent that they sometimes put "the godhead of the Logos" instead of "divine person." They

²⁵ Scheeben remarks here: "nor materially and indirectly."

²⁶ "Noli, Mater Verbi, verba mea despicere." The *Memorare* was certainly not composed by St. Bernard. It is nowhere found before the end of the fifteenth century, and then first as part of a longer prayer: "*Ad sanctitatis tue pedes, dulcissima Virgo Maria*" (Bricout, *Dict. prat. des connais. relig.*, 4, 887 ff.).

do not indeed do so in an abstract and strictly reduplicative sense, since they distinguish the divinity as nature from the Logos as person, but in a concrete and specificative sense in which the "divinity of the Word" means the "very Word as divine person."

The specific, maternal character of the producing activity of Mary in her relation to the person of the Son need only be borne in mind, in order to find this expression explicable. Nowadays, or in general apart from the particular question as it was put by the Nestorians, it is better avoided, as also is the expression, that there is in Christ *una natura divina Verbi incarnata*.

Against Nestorianism the expression, "the *natura divina Verbi* itself is born of Mary as *incarnata*," must mean: not only the human being who bears the Logos in himself, but the very Logos in His divine being in which He has been truly clothed with the flesh, forms the term of the maternal production. In the famous text of the deacon Ferrandus against the objection that two substances could not have been generated from a single substance, we read: "He speaks truly who understands generated separately. But in that great and wondrous sacrament which was manifested in the flesh, the divine substance united to the human substance was strictly born, because it was not separately born. The pure divinity was strictly born of the Father, the same incarnate divinity was strictly born of the mother."²⁷

In the natural motherhood the viewpoint of the "fruit" is of itself predominant. One must, however, not be tempted to place it with Christ also in the foreground, not to mention considering it as a unique measure. The

²⁷ Ferrandus, *Epist. ad Anat.*, 17; *PL*, LXVII, 906.

concept of the being of Christ as "incarnate Word" forbids this. He is in the first place a divine person who possesses humanity as united with Himself, and only in the second place a human being who possesses divinity.

Thus Mary, too, is for this reason alone mother of a fruit which is not merely a human being, but at the same time God and Son of God, because the *semen divinum* which she has conceived and from which this fruit proceeds, is a divine person who assumes her flesh.

CHAPTER IX

The Bridal Motherhood¹

THE explanation we have given about the divine term of Mary's motherhood and her maternal activity which conditions and determines it, enables us to understand more easily and completely the relation which here exists between the Son and the mother: that is, from the viewpoint of its specific form and meaning to the subject, both on the part of the Son and that of the mother.

THE RELATION CONSIDERED ON THE PART OF THE SON

If we consider the relation on the part of the Son, its meaning to the subject depends on the way this subject is modified. With regard to this, there are two views among the theologians.

The first sees in Christ the subject of the human sonship inasmuch as He is this particular human being. So that He forms the subject of the sonship not only through His humanity, but also in and with His humanity. In this case the latter is a real relation in Christ as much as His divine sonship toward God the Father, for it immediately and formally rests upon His origin from Mary and includes a certain inner dependence on the subject, or the

¹ Literature: Georg. de Rhodes, *Disputationes theol. scholast.*, tract. 8, *De Maria Deipara*; Christoph. Vega, *Theologia Mariana*, palaestra 31 (useful only as material); Passaglia, *De imm. conc.*, sec. 6, c. 3-4.

fact that His being is conditioned through the term of the relation.

This view considers the relation of Christ to His mother under the aspect previously explained, namely, that of "fruit" or "child," or of a "perfect personal fruit," which is also called "son." But it is deficient in this, that it takes merely and simply this relation into consideration as sonship and regards it as the real relation of the sonship.

On the other hand, the second view considers the strict concept of the sonship. According to this concept the son has formally as "person," and indeed as a person equal to the father, relation to the mother so far as he is bearer of a nature communicated to him by her; more especially in our case so far as the Son, the equal of God the Father, is bearer of a nature with which the mother has clothed Him and which He Himself has assumed of her; in other words, so far as the Son of God, by taking possession of a nature which materially comes of the mother, is born in this nature of the mother.

According to this view the person of the Logos (with due allowance for the humanity appropriated to Him, but not in and with it, that is, as forming a whole with it) is by Himself the real subject of the sonship, as He is by Himself, as existing in the constitution of man, the subject of the assumption and possession of the humanity.

So can the sonship in its subject be no longer a real relation: for the subject can no longer stand in any dependence on the mother. In the Logos it is rather only a *relatio rationis* which, however, has a foundation in the real possession of the humanity on the part of the Logos, and in the real origin of the humanity of Mary.

Still further: as the other relations of God to the crea-

ture, it is so much a *relatio rationis* that a real relation of dependence of the creature toward God conforms to it. For Mary comes in relation to the Logos as to her Son through the fact that she was assumed by Him and made His mother, and that for this very reason she as mother is influenced by Him and united with Him, and not He Himself by and with her as her Son.

This latter idea of the human sonship of Christ is in itself not only well founded, but also the only one which completely represents the sonship as the specific *correlativum* of the motherhood of Mary.

Further, it alone clearly elucidates the specific character which distinguishes the human sonship of Christ from that of other sons of man. It formally represents it as a *filiatio dignativa*, i.e., as a benevolent condescension of the Son of God to His human mother and as an elevation, full of grace, of the mother to the connection with the Son of God.

Lastly, it alone completely elucidates the relation between the human and the divine sonship in Christ Himself. Since it shows the same divine person as immediate subject, it distinguishes both sonships with equal clarity as it harmoniously unites them. It distinguishes both in the clearest manner, because it represents merely one sonship, the divine, as fixed and at the same time as a real relation, one that is purely innate to the subject and is based on its origin; the other forms only a *relatio rationis*. In virtue of this distinction it unites one sonship with the other in such a way that, in regard to the second sonship, we are unable from the start to think of a second person or even of an innate supplement of the first.

Hence the princes of real Scholasticism, St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, strongly asserted this concept of the human sonship of Christ in the development of the thesis that there are indeed two real *nativitates*, passive productions or births in Christ, but for the same reason not two real *filiationes*.²

Other great theologians of the thirteenth century seem to have shared the same opinion. It was first contested by Scotus, and apart from his school by many others who, like Suarez, joined him later. Toletus tried to reconcile them.

From what follows it is evident that the opinion of these theologians was inadequate and incorrect. In connection with their theory they devised for the man Christ and thus for the Son of Mary as such, apart from the eternal sonship of God which materially belongs to Him, still a second and divine sonship, more or less analogous to the supernatural and divine sonship of other men and sons of men. The first theory is a necessary supposition to the latter, and is necessarily its cause as well, so that it is difficult to reject the second and keep the first as many do.

The first theory has a basis of truth inasmuch as the relation of "child" (as "fruit") toward the mother formally belongs to Christ as to a human *compositum* which is hypostatically completed and achieved by the Logos, and not to the Logos as bearer of the humanity. As will be pointed out elsewhere, the basis of truth in the latter theory lies in this, that there is also in Christ a relation of "child" to God the Father, which follows from the aspect

² St. Thomas, IIIa, q.35, a.4 (and Greg. a Valentia and Salmanticenses, disp. 33, dub. 4); St. Bonaventure, *In 3 Sent.* dist. 8.

of "offspring from God" and differs entirely from the "eternal" sonship, which belongs also to the man Christ as a person.

If in the latter case the being a child of God, which is not identical with the eternal sonship, should constitute a second sonship, a double human sonship would also have to be accepted in Christ. This has certainly not occurred to anybody and is altogether untenable. For, according as the sonship is considered from the one or other point of view, it appears under two concepts which do not overlap though the one essentially includes the other; they are merely two aspects of the position of the Son toward the mother.

It cannot be denied that in particular the Latin Fathers who sometimes speak of the *assumptio filii hominis in unitatem personae Filii Dei*, conceive *filius hominis* in the sense of the first opinion. This way of speaking is ambiguous and not to be followed.

THE RELATION CONSIDERED ON THE PART OF THE MOTHER

If we consider the relation of the human sonship on the part of the mother, it appears in her to be a real relation to her divine Son, as much as the relation of other mothers to their human sons. This is true particularly in the more specific sense, that the divine motherhood must be regarded as a relation of the most real appropriation of the mother to the Son.

Its real character shows very particularly the relation of the divine motherhood in Mary through the most real and quite unique nobility which it grants to the person of the mother. This raises her to a share in the dignity of

her divine Son, which, for a created person, is indeed the highest attainable.

To understand fully this form and meaning of the relation of the divine motherhood, it must be considered from a double point of view, according as it rests: (1) upon the proper producing and natural bearing activity of the mother; or (2) upon the spiritual and free action of her Son.

If the relation is considered as based upon the proper and natural activity of the mother, Mary's divine motherhood appears as a most sublime relation so far as the mother is considered the principle of her Son.

In the first place, her unique loftiness appears in this, that the natural activity, i.e., the activity of created nature which forms the being, reaches in Mary its absolutely highest achievement, under the supernatural influence of God. For Mary cooperates through her maternal activity in the production of the absolutely highest and most perfect fruit which can be brought forth. The latter then comes forth from her as a fruit, completely holy in its being and really filled with the fullness of the godhead. On the other hand, Mary alone offers something to God which is taken up into Himself and with which He is clothed in His being. In this manner she exercises an activity which quite alone as a natural activity *fines deitatis attingit*, as Cajetan ³ says, i.e., reaches the very godhead. Every other activity of the creature toward God reaches the godhead merely as an intentional activity, that is, through knowledge and love.

The loftiness of Mary's activity appears in a still clearer

³ Cajetan, in IIa-IIae, q. 103, a. 4 ad 2 (in the Leonine edition of the *Summa theol.* of St. Thomas, IX, p. 382).

light when the following is taken into consideration. With the natural, human motherhood the mother in the production of her son only cooperates with the creating influence of God. Mary, however, cooperates with the proper spiritual activity of the nature of God the Father, through which He produces His Son in His bosom in order to produce the same Son in her bosom and to give birth to Him. Mary's maternal activity is therefore the most sublime service which a creature can offer to God, or rather to which God can raise a creature, and as such it includes the loftiest and virtual relations to God.

Further, the incarnation of the Logos contains the most perfect revelation and communication of God *ad extra*, as an effusion of the eternal light and of the source of eternal life into the world. Hence Mary's maternal activity appears as the function of a mirror that reflects the invading light and brings it into the world.

As an activity which conveys the innate substance of the principle into the product, the maternal activity is the basis of a substantial relation of the mother to the Son, which is closest and most real. The latter reveals itself in the natural motherhood simply as a blood-relationship, and such is also the relationship of Mary to Christ so far as He is her fruit or so far as He is man.

Her exceptional dignity is evident from the fact that the man to whom Mary is related by ties of blood is the God-man. Yet it reveals itself still more clearly when the relationship of Mary to the God-man is so understood that it comes to the fore as a relationship to God in Himself or in His purest, spiritual being. Of course, as such it can no longer be regarded as a blood-relationship, but, with

St. Thomas,⁴ we can say that, according to the analogy of the second form of human relationship, it is spiritual affinity to God, something like family relationship.

Affinity is a relationship which a person has to another person through the marriage of a blood relation with the latter. Marriage itself, as the admission of the married subject into the person of him whom that subject marries, takes place in the most perfect manner where there follows from it not only a moral and juridical unity of the person, but also a physical one. Hence this relationship to God into which Mary enters through the hypostatic marriage of the humanity related to her by blood with the Logos, is not only an equally true affinity but also a much more perfect and closer one than that which can take place among men.

This idea of the relationship of the Mother of God to her divine Son corresponds to the stricter idea of the subject of the human sonship in Christ, which directly places this sonship in the divine person of the Logos. For the appropriation of the substance of the mother to the *Deus-Verbum* includes directly also a substantial relation to the *Verbum Deus*, i.e., the Word as God.

Through this the relationship between mother and Son presents with Mary the opposite aspect of the natural relation. For here the mother becomes related to a higher person, who exists independent of her, as to the head of her family and as taken up in His family. Moreover, Mary's relationship to God appears founded through the hypostatic union of the human nature of Christ with the Logos to the point that this same union also forms the bond

⁴ St. Thomas, IIa IIae, q. 103, a. 4, and elsewhere.

through which the human person of Mary is connected with and related to God in His spiritual and holy being.

Mary's relation to God essentially differs from every other merely friendly relation of a created person to God. The specific trait of that relation and thus the unique nobility of the Mother of God and her participation in the dignity of her Son, is expressed more fully and perfectly through this than when it is formally based only on the essential relation of the mother or on the blood-relationship to the God-man.

Moreover, the thought expressed in the affinity appears still more clearly and strongly from the following point of view, which originally is based completely on the stricter idea of the sonship. According to this idea the hypostatic union in Christ is notable as a bond and also as a figure of the relation of the Mother of God to God.

The relation of the mother to her divine Son must be traced not alone to the mother's natural activity, but primarily to the activity of her divine Son Himself, who makes and accepts her as His mother, and gives Himself to her as her Son.

From this angle the motherhood of Mary is formally founded on the idea of the divine Logos who infuses Himself in the virginal womb of the mother through His hypostatic infusion into the flesh taken from her. Through this, Mary is as much anointed and made the Mother of God as the flesh, taken from her, is made the flesh of God, for the Logos is so taken up in her that she herself is taken up in Him in an analogous way as the flesh taken from her.

Consequently the relation of the mother to the divine Son appears as a marriage with His divine person. Here

now the Bridegroom gives Himself to the bride as her Son and dwells in her in virtue of this gift. Thus the union possesses the full force and closeness of that relation in which the ordinary mother stands to the person of her child taken up in her bosom. But this natural relation is at the same time changed in such a manner through the concept of the marriage with the divine person, that it becomes a relation of the mother to a higher person, who governs and influences her; a relation, too, arbitrarily contracted by this person and intended to be a lasting association of the mother with Him, which is as perfect as possible.

In reality, therefore, Mary is characterized not only as "bride of the Word" but on the other hand as "dwelling-temple" or "seat," "ark-sanctuary," of the Word. All names are used interchangeably in such a way that they mutually define and complete one another. For instance, this may be seen in the description of the womb of the Virgin as the "bridal chamber" or the "bridal bed" of the Word.

In Latin under the term *matrimonium* the relation which marriage brings about between the mother and the bridegroom, is also called "motherhood." Hence Mary's relation to her divine Son is characterized in a striking manner as *matrimonium divinum*. But for the sake of the purely spiritual character of that relation, under this aspect no other name may be given to the mother than "bride of God," which of itself expresses a purely spiritual relation.

In the sense of marriage thus viewed, the maternal relation of Mary to her divine Son includes a union of her created person with the uncreated person of the Logos, effected by Himself. This union is a figure of the

hypostatic union of Christ's flesh with God. Such it is even more so than that the natural marriage of a woman with a man, with regard to her body belonging to his person, is a figure of the hypostatic union of the man's flesh with his spiritual soul.

In natural marriage the bride is taken up by the bridegroom through his will which she accepts and which the Creator sanctifies. This taking up is so intimate that she ideally and really grows together with him to one whole and, as though incorporated and united with him, forms with him one moral body, in which both physical persons belong to each other through mutual gift, in the most perfect manner. Thus the virgin mother is united through the will and power of the creating Logos with His own person. Through the acceptance of the flesh of the mother in the physical unity of His purely spiritual person, He accepts her in a purely spiritual but most real manner into a moral corporate unity of person and gives Himself to her just as He appropriates her to Himself.

According to the expression of the Oriental languages, marriage is a mutual "clothing" of the married persons through which the bride becomes the body and raiment of the bridegroom, and the bridegroom becomes the head and crown of the bride. Here also, as the Fathers frequently indicate, such a mutual clothing takes place in an eminent degree and in a manner analogous to that in Christ Himself between His humanity and divinity. There as well as here, the marriage occurs between the "flesh" and the "spirit": the flesh clothes the spirit externally, and the spirit clothes the flesh interiorly. Moreover, it is a marriage between created flesh and creating spirit: the flesh, according to its entire being, belongs to

the spirit and is subject to it; and on its side the spirit can dwell in the closest manner in the flesh and fill it with itself.

In a certain sense the pure union of grace with God also forms a marriage with Him, and indeed a marriage analogous to the hypostatic union. However, as it is not communicated through the hypostatic union, it has not the full specific strength of marriage. On the contrary, it bears only the character of a simply friendly relation.

Although the expressions corresponding to this view are used times without number by the Fathers as well as by theologians,⁵ this representation is seldom scientifically formulated and utilized by them. This representation needs greater emphasis, as it offers many advantages for a complete and clear exposition of the sublime position of the Mother of God.

1) In the divine motherhood it first of all safeguards the virginity of the mother as clearly as it definitely supposes the independence of the Son toward the mother.

2) It further represents the motherhood as a grace given to the mother by her divine Son, who descends to her and raises her up to Himself, and not as a result of her own activity only, as would be the case with a human son.

3) Consequently the Mother of God appears from the beginning as united with the divine Son, belonging to Him and dependent on Him, and called to participate in His dignity and in His possessions, while with ordinary mothers the opposite is the case.

4) From this it is also evident that the relation of the

⁵ For "sponsa Verbi" or "Dei," see numerous places in Marracci, *Poly-anthea Mariana*.

mother to the Son is a most perfect and eternal association with Him, willed by Himself, an association essentially closer and more unbreakable and lasting than the relation of a mother to her human son.

5) Since, in the case of the divine mother, the marriage with the divine Logos, dwelling in her, continues after His bodily birth and as, according to His divine being, He does not leave His mother, likewise the relation of the mother to the Son maintains permanently the same reality and closeness as before the birth.

6) On the other hand the idea of marriage allows us to consider the Mother of God before the conception of her Son in a relation, not merely potential, to a person who would be brought forth in the future. It becomes an actual relation to a person who at the very moment already exists. It is analogous to the relation in a *matri-monium ratum ante consummationem*, but such that it is closer and more real by reason of the closest and most intimate indwelling of the Logos in the mother.

7) On the strength of the idea of the marriage of the mother with a divine person dwelling in her, the entire relation of the mother to the Son, after as well as before the conception, possesses the typical meaning and force of the relation that exists between both in the time between the conception and the birth. This relation itself does not come to the fore as with a human son, in a taking up of the child in the mother who feeds it with her blood, but as a taking up of the mother in the holy, divine person and as an anointing with the holy being of the latter. Thus the divine motherhood resembles the hypostatic union, since it is a union with a divine person, which embraces the mother's entire and most intimate being. It

ennobles and sanctifies the mother in the most perfect manner and forms the basis of the most complete participation in the life and possessions of the divine person.

8) Lastly, from this point of view we may conclude that, from the moment of her creation and in virtue of the intention of her Creator, which underlies her creation, Mary was specially intended for the union as bride with the Logos and, as it were, was created in this union; and also that, by virtue of this intention of God, the entire existence of her person has grown together with her relation to the divine person of her Son, in a manner analogous to the existence of the flesh of Christ with His hypostatic union.

The analogy between the relation of Mary and of the humanity of Christ to the Logos, expressed in the "marriage with the Logos," is particularly revealed in this, that Mary is characterized in a signal manner in the language of the Church as "house and seat of the godhead" or of the eternal Wisdom. She is as a house and seat in which in the real meaning of the word, the fullness of the divinity, is so infused as to dwell bodily therein. The eternal Wisdom is so implanted and deeply rooted in her that she seems to have grown together with Him. This, too, is the deeper meaning of the representation of Mary in the Apocalypse: the woman clothed with the sun.

By virtue of this relation to the Logos, Mary is in a special manner the "mirror" and "image of God," because she is in the Logos illuminated through the radiation of the light of the godhead and permeated with the essential dew of the strength of God. As she is compared with the sun in the bride of the Canticle of Canticles, she appears also under both these names as assimilated to the

Logos in the quality proper to Him which is characterized by the same names.⁶ She is consequently His "likeness" or His "glory," in the same way as, according to St. Paul,⁷ the woman is the likeness and glory of the man.

Finally, from the idea of the affinity and of the marriage it follows that Mary's relation to God, contained in the divine motherhood, can also be considered from the viewpoint of an eminent and unique position of child of God. Hence Mary is called ἡ θεόπαις as much as ἡ Θεοτόκος by the Greek Fathers of later date and in the *Menaëa*.⁸

Unlike other ransomed creatures, who are merely adoptive children, Mary possesses such a relation to God that the participation in His possessions, His life and bliss, is, in her, based on the most perfect and substantial admission into the family of God. In other words, between God and her there exists a *necessitudo* which brings with it the absolute community of possessions and life. In her case this relationship seems the more complete, as the seed of the Word of truth, from which the children of God are born,⁹ is implanted in her. Through the assuming of her flesh the personal Word Himself entered into organic relation to her and, by virtue of this relation, made her in a unique way the mirror and image of God.

Indeed, Mary's divine relationship of child of God, like her whole relation to God, goes back primarily to the divine Logos. As the Logos Himself comes to the fore

⁶ Wisd. 7:26: *Candor est enim (Sapientia) lucis aeternae et speculum sine macula et imago bonitatis illius.*

⁷ I Cor. 1:7.

⁸ For the use of the expression ἡ θεόπαις, see Passaglia, *De imm. conc.*, sec. 6, cap. 3, a. 5. The *Menaëa* are about the same as our *Breviaria*; they are divided according to the twelve months of the year. See Nilles, *Kalendarium Manuale* (Innsbruck, 1896), I, 49.

⁹ Jas. 1:18; I Pet. 1:23; cf. John 1:12 ff.

both as Son and as bridegroom, He therefore appears also both as son and as father of the mother. Her daughterhood, however, can also be considered as a participation in the divine sonship of the Logos, founded on the affinity and the marriage, particularly since the sonship of the Logos is communicated to Christ as man and here appears as sonship of the *puer Dei* and the *agnus Dei*. Therefore the Fathers call Mary the "only beloved" and "only-begotten" child, or daughter, of God. These titles they give her not less often than they speak of her as the "lamb of God."¹⁰ Together with the most perfect union, the most perfect likeness also, and hence the most perfect community, between Mary and her divine Son is revealed, the name "only-begotten daughter of God" can in its full meaning be even considered the most adequate summary of the community between Mary and God contained in the divine motherhood.

The Church applies to Mary many texts from the Sapiential books. This application rests also on the concept of "image" and "child."¹¹

In a sense common to other ransomed creatures, Mary can, apart from her divine motherhood, be considered a child of God since she is brought forth by God through creation and adorned with sanctifying grace. From this point of view she can be called a child of God in an eminent and unique manner, because the sanctifying grace bestowed on her surpasses incomparably that of all other creatures. Her grace is particularly distinguished from that of other mortals as a *gratia perpetua*; *perpetua a parte post*, i.e., never ceasing, as contrasted with the first

¹⁰ Cf. Marracci, *Polyanthea Mar.*, s.v. "Agnus."

¹¹ See *supra*, pp. 22 ff.

couple; *perpetua a parte ante*, i.e., beginning with her origin, as contrasted with the descendants of our first parents.

However, the specific character of Mary's divine relationship as child of God is inexhaustible; in it sanctifying grace must be pictured as based on, borne, and animated by her special relation to God.

The contradistinction between the relation of mother and that of daughter with respect to the same person, incompatible in the natural order, is in this case solved very simply by the fact that the mother's son is at the same time her bridegroom. In general the relation of the bride to the bridegroom can be symbolized by the relation of the body to the head. Likewise the relation of Mary as mother-bride of the Logos finds its complete analogy in the organic mutual relation which exists between the central organ of the physical body (the heart) and the head. The head is animated with the blood that flows from the heart, and therefore owes its material existence to the heart. The head, by the nerves radiating from it, communicates to the heart its vital spirit, thus making possible the particular service rendered it through the heart.

Furthermore, because the members of the body have grown together with the head, a relation differing essentially from every other merely virtual or friendly relation, is established with the spirit of the head; and so Mary's privileged position in the mystical body of Christ is shown particularly from the fact that, in contrast to the other members, she occupies the place of the heart to the head.

To obtain a more thorough understanding of the meaning and import of the proper relation of a creature

to God as exemplified in the divine motherhood, and also of the analogous expressions chosen for it, a more detailed exposition will follow.

RELATION OF MARY TO THE BLESSED TRINITY ¹²

Expressions descriptive of that union (affinity, being the bride and child) can be applied in a wider sense to all supernatural unions of the creature with God. As was explained, they have here a specific meaning according to which the Mother of God is in a unique manner "sister" and "bride" and "daughter of God," and "temple" or "seat" and "image of God" as well. Among them, these three expressions bear this relation, that the meaning of "affinity" receives its completion in "being the bride," and that of "daughterhood" its specific form through the "being of the bride."

Figuratively all these relations find their striking expressions in the title *columba Dei* from the Cantic of Canticles, applied to Mary. The Fathers frequently used the expression "lamb of God." It expresses particularly the community between Mary and the man Christ. This title characterizes more definitely and significantly the mother of the Lamb of God as formal in her virginal and maternal fertility toward the Lamb of God and also in her likeness to Him, and especially in her participation in His divine sonship.

Relations to the Son. These formulas express the union of the divine mother with God. In the sense previously explained, this union is directed to the divine person of the Son, as He is the eternal Son of the Father, since it is formally brought about through the hypostatic union of

¹² Cf. Bittremieux, *Marialia*, Brussels, 1936, pp. 213-95.

the humanity of Christ with the Logos. But these expressions do not exclude the relation of the mother contracted by blood, the application to the man Christ, personally constituted through the hypostatic union and brought forth through the producing cooperation of the mother as her fruit. They rather include these, inasmuch as this man, as God-man, possesses the position and power of a divine person. For this very reason the relation of the divine mother to the man Christ is of such a nature that she communicates with Him as with a higher being, to whom she belongs in a dependent way, and that He on His side lets her participate in His sublimity and communicates His spiritual life to her.

Toward the man Christ these three relations are clearly expressed in their interior unity and at the same time in their concrete certainty in the relation of the mother to her Son as to her Head. The analogous human ties of relationship from which these names have been transferred to these three spiritual relations, all lead to a relation to a family head. This concept of "head," under the form in which it is represented both in these analogies and in its original object—the head in the human organism—likewise indicates such a higher being, who has the same nature in common with its members, according to its material side.

Exaggerated or incorrect are the views of those who attach to the Blessed Virgin, because of her motherhood, the same authority by nature over the man Christ as the ordinary mother has over her human son. Accordingly Christ would have been by nature obliged to obey, and only His duty toward the Father would have limited this obligation. The submissiveness of Christ, which St. Luke

speaks of,¹³ is rather to be considered, as St. Ambrose says, an *officium liberae dignationis et pietatis*, which rests on the free will of Christ Himself. The relation also to His mother which precedes the free will of Christ and is the basis of His submission to His mother, is to be defined only as the relation of the *pietas naturalis*, which is due to the head of the family from each of its members.¹⁴

Relations to the other persons. Under the name of "mother" the union of the Mother of God with God must be confined exclusively to the divine person of the Logos, and in general it essentially refers primarily to Him alone and is only indirectly referred to the other persons. Yet, through the other names, it is so characterized that it can be brought under that name in connection not only with the Logos, but simply with God, thus with the whole Trinity, and consequently with each of the three persons.

According to the latter point of view, some names in the language of the Church are almost as constantly ascribed to one definite person, as the motherhood essentially refers to the person of the Logos. According to circumstances these separate names obtain in this sense such a specific meaning that they express a relation, which can only be referred, under this definite form—precisely as the motherhood—to a definite divine person and is specifically proper to Him; e.g., that with regard to God the Father. In that case the particular, relative character of that person is entwined in the intended relation of Mary to Him.

Relations to God the Father. The union of the mother of the Logos is confined to God the Father usually under

¹³ Luke 2:51.

¹⁴ St. Ambrose, *In Luc.*, Bk. II, no. 65; *PL*, XV, 1575. Cf. G. de Rhodes, *op. cit.*, q. 2, sec. 3, and Toletus, *In Luc.* ad h. 1.

the name of "child" or "daughter," also "image of the eternal Father," and in such a manner that these names formally rest on a special union with the Son of this Father and hence have in this case even a very particular meaning and allude to the Father by means of the relation of the Logos to Him. Mary is there imagined as "daughter of the Father" inasmuch as she is connected with His Son through affinity and marriage, and maintains by and in Him relations to the Father Himself. Moreover, she carries that name, since, as *propria sedes Sapientiae a Patre genitae*, she is the most perfect image of the Father *ad extra*, after the incarnate wisdom. Thus she is to be regarded as a daughter whose daughterhood is the most perfect participation in and the most perfect image of the sonship of the eternal Son.

Such a special relation to the person of the Father does not occur with the ordinary children of grace. Hence it characterizes the divine daughterhood of Mary as a form that differs essentially from the latter and is superior to it.

Next to it, the mother of the Son of God can also be called in a special manner "bride of the Father." For, as mother she has received the Son of the Father through donation from His side as her Son; she possesses Him conjointly with the Father and is therefore connected with the Father by His Son as being hers also. These expressions indicative of the union of Mary with God are more unusual, and rightly so. Through the very fact that the mother of the Son of God is characterized as connected through marriage with God as Father, the thought arises that, as with a human marriage, here also not only the dynamic influence of the Father on the mother, but also the substantial relation of the mother to the Father, is the

foundation of the substantial relation of Mary to the Son and precedes this one. In reality the former is first accomplished by the latter. We could even go so far as to think that the Son of the Father is also first produced with the cooperation of the mother, and that the mother is therefore also associated with the Father in the *generatio Verbi*. Some modern writers have expressed themselves thus.

Precisely to obviate the forming of such erroneous opinions is one of the reasons why the bridal state of the Mother of God is usually referred to the Holy Ghost instead of to the Father. Through the fact that the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from the Logos, appears as bridegroom, the production of the Logos is formally presented as complete in itself. The relation also of the mother to the Father is presented as effected by the Logos Himself.

This does not mean in the least that Mary as mother of the Son of the eternal Father has absolutely no special connection with the Father in His quality as Father, since He is also the principle of His Son. For, with regard to the Son of God, born *ad extra* in humanity, Mary possesses such a connection; and since she cooperates here in the eternal production under the influence of the Father, she resembles in a special way the Father as the principle of the eternal production in her own activity.

She resembles Him, first of all as she is the only productive principle with regard to the human nature of Christ, as much as God the Father is such with regard to the divine nature, and through this she possesses in her virginal motherhood the power of the male fatherhood; secondly, as she produces Christ in the flesh through a spiritual power without violation of her virginity, as much as the Father produces Him according to the spirit.

But this very resemblance of Mary to God the Father is rather obscured than elucidated by the allusion of the name of "bride of the Father" to the corresponding human relation. On the contrary, it stands out beautifully in the name of "daughter of the Father," as it includes the idea of image of the Father. This idea, applied to Mary, not only states that the divine daughterhood is the most perfect figure of the sonship of the Son of God, but, extended without violence, it equally asserts that the motherhood of Mary is the most perfect image of the paternity of God the Father with regard to the Son of God in His humanity.

In general the expression "image of the Father" sets forth the particular relationship in which the mother of the Son of God stands to God the Father, more clearly, richly, and harmoniously than the expression "bride of the Father." For the relationship with God the Father in the possession of His eternal Son appears in "image of the Father" in such a way that the mother bears in her bosom, as infused there, this Son, produced by God the Father out of Himself and borne in His bosom. The connection, however, in the producing and birth of the Son of God *ad extra* appears here in this form, that the mother, according to the expression of the preface of the Blessed Virgin Mary, pours out into the world the everlasting light, issued from the Father.

Relations to the Holy Ghost. The union of the Mother of God with God is usually attributed to the Holy Ghost under the name of bride, and the associated names of temple and sanctuary of the Holy Ghost. This is done in view of the fact that Christ is represented in the Creed and in the annunciation by the angel as conceived and born of

the Holy Ghost, or produced by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is indicated in these texts as principle of the *actio productiva humanitatis Christi* and also of the *actio unitiva*. So the relationship of bride must be traced back to Him in this double aspect. In the *actio unitiva* the Holy Ghost works only in community with those persons from whom He proceeds; and the union, produced by this *actio* tends directly to one of these persons. Therefore the name of "bride of the Holy Ghost" must not be understood in the sense of something innate to the Holy Ghost, but only as an attribute, that is, it is adduced in connection with the Holy Ghost as the representative of the entire divine Trinity in its marriage with Mary.

The indication of the principle and of the terms of the marriage of Mary with God under the name of the Holy Ghost distinguishes this divine marriage specifically from that which takes place among men and raises it above it in dignity. For this name characterizes the term of the marriage as a purely spiritual and completely holy state; the marriage act appears as a purely spiritual act of the amplest and holiest love, and the result of the marriage is seen to be the closest indwelling of the holy bridegroom in the bride as in His temple.

Further, the bringing into prominence of the person of the Holy Ghost in the principle and the term of the marriage causes the union of Mary with God to appear, not as specifically limited to the person of her Son, and still less to that of the Father, but as extending to the entire Trinity. Moreover, in the marriage of Mary with the Son or with the Father, it precludes the appearance of a created person being forced between the persons

of the Trinity and taking precedence of the Holy Ghost, or at least of being placed on the same level with Him.

These and the other above-mentioned reasons for ascribing to the Holy Ghost the actions of uniting and producing, also justify and render significant the ascribing of Mary's marriage to the same divine person. Moreover, it has a special value for the honor of Mary and of the Holy Ghost Himself.

On the one side it reflects honor on the Mother of God, when her dignity is brought into the closest relations with each person of the Blessed Trinity. On the other, it redounds to the honor of the Holy Ghost, when He appears as in no way excluded from the glory, power, and benevolence which the other divine persons reveal in their relation to Mary and when, on the contrary, a special relation is attributed to Him which answers to His hypostatic character. This all the more so, because the special relation is precisely such that it naturally causes and achieves the relation of Mary as "sister of the Word" and "daughter of the Father." Through this relation too, the Holy Ghost, who in the Blessed Trinity is without fruit, is the more clearly represented as principle of the extension of the fruitfulness of the Trinity *ad extra*, accomplished in the incarnation of the Logos, or as principle of the birth *ad extra* of the Son, produced by the Father in His bosom, in and from the bosom of a mother.

Hence, it is true, the marriage of the Mother of God with the Holy Ghost is merely an attribution with regard to the third person of the Blessed Trinity, and in that very attribution this person appears less as term of the relation than as achiever of the marriage with another person, namely, the Logos, or with the Father. Yet the

union with the Logos, intended by the influence of the Holy Ghost, includes implicitly and indirectly a strictly personal relation to the Holy Ghost as the particular Spirit of her Son and bridegroom, as much as to God the Father as the Father of her Son and bridegroom. For, in virtue of His coming forth from the Logos, the particular Spirit of the Logos is in Him, and with Him given to the bride of the Logos in a special manner as her own spirit.

This special and personal relation of the Mother of God to the Holy Ghost is strikingly expressed in saying that she, like the humanity of Christ, is called the temple belonging to the Holy Ghost. Mary is a temple with which the Holy Ghost is related through the grace that proceeds from Him, and through His own principle. In this temple He therefore dwells in a certain sense *corporaliter* and *naturaliter*. Hence the expression "temple" or "sanctuary of the Holy Ghost" is as much in use for the relation of the Mother of God to the Holy Ghost, as is the name of *sponsa Spiritus Sancti*. It is also most significant. For, in the communication and revelation of the inner divine productions *ad extra*, as completed by the Incarnation, or in the appearing *ad extra* of the persons, proceeding in God, it assigns to the person of the Holy Ghost an outer divine term in the woman, in like manner as the person of the Son possesses one in the man. In a harmonious union and interaction there appears next to the "holy one of God" the "temple of God"; next to the incarnate Logos the carnal dwelling of the Holy Ghost, which in unity with Him forms the adequate principle of the birth *ad extra* of the Logos, produced in the bosom of the Father; next to the "Lamb of God" the "dove of God."

Further, in this connection Mary as "bride of the

Logos" is also in a special manner an image of the person of the Holy Ghost, that is, in His difference from and His relation to the Logos; and this in a similar but more perfect manner than Mary's prototype, the first Eve, was such an image in her relation to Adam. Therefore the relation of the Holy Ghost to the Logos forms the particular image of that relation by which Mary is connected with the Logos and through the Logos with the Divinity, as much as the relation of the Logos to the Father is the essential form through which is determined the relation of the man Christ to the Father and to God in general.

The Holy Ghost is connected with the Logos because the latter communicates to Him His entire essence through His love and places Him therefore in a complete unity of being with Himself. In like manner the mother of the Logos is connected with Him through the fact that the Logos through His love gives her His person and assumes her into a union with His person, which is the closest imaginable in the relation between two persons. Just as the Holy Ghost, owing to His origin from the divine love is also the specific bearer and representative of the sweetness and vivifying heart of that divine love, the Mother of God likewise bears this characteristic in her own degree. Hence she bears the name of *vita* and *dulcedo nostra*.

For all these reasons Mary, as well as the Church, is called after the creature which is the symbol of the Holy Ghost, that is, the dove. Moreover, with her the latter is the symbol of the fecundity which proceeds from the Holy Ghost and which therefore is virginal and maternal toward the man Christ.

Under this name Mary also appears as resembling the

Holy Ghost and connected with Him, or rather informed and inspired, as it were, by Him; thus as one moral person with Him so that He forms the seal of her personality. Therefore when Mary, like the Church, in the quality of dwelling and instrument of the Logos, is not simply understood as one person with Him, but as a person distinct from Him, standing opposite Him and acting in her own way, still with the character of a person worthy of Him and equipped with supernatural privileges, thus really a personal bride. This, then, happens because the Holy Ghost is not taken as representative of the godhead of the Logos, but as a person distinct from the Logos in moral unity of person with Mary.

This idea appears wherever Mary, like the Church, is represented as the mother of grace and of the ransomed souls in a certain coordination with Christ as father of eternal life and spiritual father of mankind. Hence the Holy Ghost is so much the bridegroom of Mary that He is the achiever, seal, and guaranty of her marriage with the Logos and in this not less the bearer and representative of the relation of the bridegroom to the bride than of the relation of the bride to the bridegroom.

From the preceding it follows that, with respect to the entire Blessed Trinity and to each divine person, a unique relation and likeness is due in a special way to the Mother of God, in connection with which she is related in a certain manner with the Trinity and its image. If we wish to express harmoniously the relations to the individual divine persons, this is best done by the use of the formulas which are already in use with the union of grace, namely, *filia Patris, sponsa Filii, templum Spiritus sancti*.

Many have wrongly understood the expression of

Hesychius of Jerusalem ¹⁵ that, as there were three stories in the ark of the covenant, the *pleroma* of the Blessed Trinity is in Mary too, that is, that the entire Blessed Trinity dwells in her and is united with her. Hence some writers, since the seventeenth century, ¹⁶ have said that the Mother of God herself is or represents a supplement of the Blessed Trinity *ad extra*.

To this expression a tolerable meaning can certainly be attached, analogous to the one by which the Apostle calls the Church the *pleroma* of Christ. ¹⁷ In this sense it can even be said of Mary, that she is the *pleroma* of Christ, as Eve is of Adam. But as applied to the Blessed Trinity, this expression is too misleading, and its meaning is implied more beautifully and clearly in the title of "image of the Trinity."

With Cardinal Bérulle we can certainly speak of a co-operation of Mary to the bringing about of an *ad extra* supplement to the relations of the Trinity. For example, in Christ the relations of the Father and the Holy Ghost to the incarnate Logos join, supplementing as it were the internal relations of the divine persons among themselves, and in particular the relations of the Father and the Holy Ghost to the Logos. The Father obtains here a real authority over the Son, who is fully equal to Him in the divinity; the Holy Ghost, however, who has His principle in the godhead of the Son, becomes in a certain way the principle of the Son and shares the authority of the Father over the Son.

In reality this supplement of the relations of the Trin-

¹⁵ Hesychius Hieros., *Sermo* 5, PG, XCIII, 1461.

¹⁶ Vega, *Theol. Mar.* (1866), II, 448. Cf. Ferd. Quir. de Salazar, *Comm. in Prov.* (in 8:23) nos. 300 f.

¹⁷ Eph. 1:23.

ity also belongs essentially to the highest glorification of the entire Trinity in the Incarnation. But in that case it must be directly ascribed to Christ alone, and we must guard against expressing Mary's cooperation in its accomplishment, in such a way as to make Mary herself appear that supplement.

Lastly, as an entirely proper one, this union of the Mother of God with God differs from the ordinary union of grace as well as from that which, for the whole human race, results or must result from the hypostatic union of one of the members of that race with the Logos. Yet to the union of the human race it is as much the prototype as the means of connection. The Fathers express the thought by saying that in Mary, as in His bridal chamber, the Logos espoused human nature in its entirety. For, as the human race brings forth Christ as its fruit in Mary and by Mary, it shares also in and by Mary this union with God, which is characterized in her through the expression of "marriage with God" and other expressions connected therewith.

In the first respect Mary's precedence is characterized through the fact that in the name of all she cooperated in the production of Christ through the offering of her flesh as well as through her own natural activity. In an analogous way her priority appears partly in the fact that she is directly assumed by the Logos, or received Him; partly also from the fact that the marriage with God was contracted through her personal consent to the divine motherhood in the name of the entire human race. St. Thomas particularly notes this circumstance,¹⁸ when he advances the reasons why the conception of the Son had to be announced to the mother.

¹⁸ St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 30, a. 1.

PART III
THE BASIC PRINCIPLE
OF
MARIOLOGY

CHAPTER X

The Distinguishing Mark of Mary's Person¹

IN THE words of the Gospel ("Mary, the mother of Jesus"²) and even more so in the concept and doctrine of the Church, Mary's maternal relation to the divine Redeemer appears pointedly as the distinguishing mark of her person. To begin with, in a general sense this expression distinguishes Mary from all others as a personage of quite excellent rank and station and of unique dignity. At the same time, of its very nature and according to the idea of the Church, it is used also in the sense that, compared with all other characteristic qualities of Mary, the distinguishing mark of "mother of Jesus" forms the capital, fundamental, and central quality to which, as subordinate attributes, all others are joined. Thus are the accidentals of a being connected with its essence, by which they are sustained and animated and from which, therefore, they receive their mark.

As all the privileges belonging to the Mother of God are of a supernatural character and thus find their principle in a supernatural gift of grace, so this applies particularly to the motherhood itself. This motherhood must therefore be defined as a supernatural distinguishing mark

¹ The literature is the same as for chap. 8.

² John 2:1, 3.

of Mary's person, to which, in addition to her nature, she is raised through divine grace and which thus has its root in a divine gift of grace through which it is constituted. To understand fully the excellence and meaning of this supernatural distinguishing mark of her person, we must first consider it in its essence, and also in its relation to her person as its subject and to God as its principle.

Let us consider the form constituting the personal distinguishing mark of the mother of Jesus: the grace of the divine motherhood.

The quality of "mother of Jesus" includes concretely all relations, based on the fact that the Son of Mary is Jesus, that is, the Redeemer of the world. It is in the first place the distinguishing mark of Mary's person, since it includes a unique relation of her person to the unique and exalted person of her Son, as the mother of Jesus is not the mother of a mere human being, but of a God-man.

Indeed, the personal distinguishing mark of Mary is, as a rule, determined by the fact that she is called Mother of God or for our point of view here, she who bears God (*Θεοτόκος*, *Deipara*). For us to understand the divine motherhood according to the full meaning of the distinguishing mark of person therein implied, it is not enough that we represent it on the analogy of the privilege which another mother acquires through her maternal relation to an excellent human person; that is, as a physiological relation of the root to the fruit, resulting from the influence of the mother upon the coming into being and the life of the son. Neither is it enough that we consider her motherhood as an office given by God, the worthy

execution of which needed to be made possible and rewarded by special graces.

The element which in the divine motherhood forms the distinguishing mark of the person and the grace of the divine motherhood is the following: a supernatural, spiritual union of the person of Mary with that of her Son. This union, brought about by the will of God, underlies her maternal activity as contrasted with the humanity of her Son and completes and perfects her bodily union with Him.

This supernatural, spiritual union with the divine person cannot be set forth more simply or clearly or with more regard to reality than through the expression *matri-monium divinum* or *connubium Verbi* in the strictest sense of the words. It is a relation which, with regard to God, forms the highest and most complete association conceivable between a created person with Himself, as a human marriage is the highest and most perfect union between two human persons. It is thus a relation which is the most perfect image of the union of a created nature with God, as human marriage is an image of the union of the body with the human soul.

Thus understood, this union includes, in accordance with the nature of marriage, a solidarity of both persons in an organic whole, in which they have grown together, and also a mutual belonging to and clothing of both persons. Mary, as united with the Logos, is taken complete possession of by Him; the Logos, as infused and implanted in her, gives Himself to her and takes her to Himself as partner and helper, in the closest, strictest, and most lasting community of life.

Evidently, in the divine motherhood, such a divine

marriage is really understood, in the same way as human motherhood presupposes a human marriage when it comes about in a manner worthy of a human being. No other human relationship achieves a personal distinguishing mark in such a thorough way as the relationship of marriage for the woman, through which she is organically united with another person. Neither does there exist in the supernatural order another relationship to God, with an equally formal and perfect supernatural distinguishing mark, as is this marriage with God, through which the person in question is organically united with God.

Consequently the supernatural gift of grace, through which God makes Mary His mother and gives Himself to her in complete and tangible possession as her own Son, is manifested most fully and with great strength and beauty in the idea of *matrimonium divinum*. For the grace of the motherhood appears here as an analogon of the grace of union in Christ, which forms the supernatural distinguishing mark of the person of Christ Himself.

In this connection the divine motherhood must be defined as a divine state as bride or a divinely bridal motherhood. Likewise, to distinguish it from every other relation of grace of the same name, the divine state of Mary as bride must also vice versa be called a divinely maternal state as bride, that is, a state as bride, specifically calculated to achieve and complete the divine motherhood; for as such it first truly and completely bears the character of marriage.

Certainly the divine state of Mary as bride first receives its completion by the divine Logos infusing Himself in her and thus making her actually His mother. So, too, does the grace of motherhood here obtain the full

character analogous to the grace of the hypostatic union. However, this completion of the bridal union must be regarded as similar to the completion of the conjugal union in the completed marriage.

Accordingly the bodily union, brought about through the conception of the Logos, presupposes a prior spiritual union in and through which it is perfected. On the other hand this spiritual union with God, which in Mary precedes the actual consummation of the motherhood, must be understood not as a simple, friendly union, or as a mere intent to the conjugal union, or even as a simple betrothal. It has to be understood in the full sense of a *matrimonium ratum*, therefore as an objective and real union. It is a union with God, achieved through the will of the Creator; or also an objective ordination and anointing, through which the Logos is appropriated by right to the Virgin and is spiritually united with her. Through this ordination the divine motherhood not only is prepared and placed in prospect, but is already adjudged virtually and in embryo.

Under this form the grace of motherhood could have been granted in that case naturally, not only before the maternal conception, but even at the first moment of the mother's existence, and could henceforth form the distinguishing mark of her person, in the nature of the grace of the hypostatic union. There is no reason why the grace of this motherhood under this form should have been given only later, particularly as, since the definition of the Immaculate Conception, the original ordination as the "bride of" stands beyond all doubt. This is so not as if it formally existed in the granting of the original, habitual grace; but for the very reason that the ordination

as bride demanded and brought with it this benefaction.

The "divinely bridal" element in Mary's divine motherhood is now so perfected in its completion through the conception of Christ, that to the spiritual relation to the Logos a bodily one is joined. Moreover, this is effected also since the Logos, being now incarnate in the fruit of Mary according to the flesh, is, according to the soul, her spiritual bridegroom and as such assumes her in the closest community of His life and activity.

From this point of view the idea of mother of the Redeemer obtains at the same time its modification. This is true in the sense that Mary, as bride of God, conceives and bears the Redeemer. She is also, as bride of the Godman, called upon and enabled to cooperate in a serving manner in His work of redemption.

As indicated elsewhere, the various elements that come together in the personal distinguishing mark of the divine motherhood, appear in a harmonious unity and in their full force when the distinguishing mark of her person is placed in the organic unity of Mary with Christ. This is particularly so when this union is considered according to the standard of the relation of the heart to the head. For here we have the unity of the root with the fruit, of the head member with the Head, and of the body with the spirit of the Head. At the same time Christ is the fruit of Mary according to the body, the Head of Mary according to the soul; but according to the divinity, the Spirit who dwells in her in a unique manner. But Mary is as the root or origin, the head member, the supplement to the humanity of Christ, and in and through the latter the seat and instrument of His godhead.

Some Protestants still believe in the divinity of Christ. Hence they acknowledge that "the fruit of Mary is the real Son of God."³ But they wish to consider little, or even nothing, about the exceptional dignity, perfection, and activity of the Mother of God in the order of grace. In this respect they can hardly be distinguished from those who deny the divinity of Christ. This idea can be reduced to this formula; Mary is the Mother of God, but not the bride of God. Expressed thus, such a view is evidently unnatural and contradictory.

Therefore as the expression, the divinely bridal motherhood, possesses a great polemical dogmatic value, so it has also a great constructive theological value for the scientific explanation of the privileges of Mary.

The motherhood, regarded as a relation of the mother to her fruit, or as bodily relationship with Christ, is not of itself enough for our considering the divine motherhood the constituting principle of the only excellence of Mary's person. Theologians express this thought by distinguishing an adequate and an inadequate, or a moral-physical and a purely physical, motherhood, and intend only the first to be considered that principle. They usually explain the motherhood in an adequate and moral-physical sense as follows: It consists in the whole of those graces which are necessary for the worthy execution of the maternal activity, or which were obtained through this activity, or which achieve the worthy extension of the relation of the mother to her fruit.

Such a widening of the idea of the motherhood will, no doubt, be too vague and indefinite. It will not pro-

³ Luke 1:35.

duce a more vivid concept nor is it a fruitful middle term leading to the individual privileges that belong to the divine motherhood.

On the contrary, the very expression, God's bridal motherhood, gives not merely a more or less adequate, moral-physical concept of the divine motherhood; according to its formal and intrinsic essence, the motherhood is also thus properly defined through an easily susceptible and clearly indicated element which is not lost in a multiplicity of things necessary or desirable for the worthy extension of the mother's relation to the fruit. It constitutes, as it were, the substantial form or the soul of that relation and therefore is the root and focus of all other qualities of the mother.

Without this middle concept we can only gradually and with difficulty discover the various privileges pertaining to the Mother of God, such as *domina omnium*. Of certain other privileges we can get hardly any idea; for example, of the sanctification of Mary through the grace of the motherhood. Thus this concept is the key of the entire Mariology.

In reference to the original marriage, Peter Chrysologus says: ⁴ "A speedy interpreter (Gabriel) flies to the bride to prevent and suspend a state of human betrothal in the bride of God, not to take the Virgin away from Joseph, but to give her to Christ to whom she is pledged in her womb, when it should happen." And again: "Although Mary His mother had been betrothed, she is His bride by virginity, and His mother by fecundity; His mother not known by a man, and conscious of His birth. And was she not mother before her conceiving, who, after

⁴ St. Peter Chrysologus, *Sermo* 140; *PL*, LII, 576.

His birth, was both mother and virgin? And how could she not be mother, who brought to birth the Author of all the years, the Giver of being to all things? ⁵

THE GRACE OF THE DIVINE MOTHERHOOD IN
RELATION TO THE DIGNITY OF ITS SUBJECT

It must merely be mentioned that this gift of grace could not be gained through Mary's natural activity. According to the unanimous teaching of theologians, neither is it possible that this grace could be gained in the proper sense of *de condigno* through supernatural actions, having their root in sanctifying grace; it could be gained in an analogous way as the union with God in glory. The reason is simple, that here it is a matter of a union with God which belongs to the higher order of the hypostatic union.

The *meritum de congruo*, to which the creature is entitled through sanctifying grace, can assert itself with Mary only in the acquiring of that higher degree of interior sanctity through which she is disposed in a worthy manner, or by which she obtains the positive susceptibility, to the possession of the grace of the motherhood, that is, in a manner in keeping with its dignity.

As such a disposition or susceptibility to the grace of the motherhood, all meritorious acts relating to this matter can certainly be considered with regard to this grace. However, they are efficacious only in the same way as the supernatural actions of others which precede sanctifying grace and are performed in view of the latter. At best, therefore, under the form of a *meritum de congruo*.

Now, every other supernatural merit, of whatever kind,

⁵ *Ibid.*, *Sermo* 146 (in Matt. 1:18); *PL*, LII, 592.

operates not in the sense that it brings about the right to a definite good at the hands of God, but only in the sense that the creature, for its own sake, is induced by God Himself to strive for the obtaining of the good to which, of His own accord, He has called it. This obtains still more in the present case, where the supernatural actions of life are not in the same inner connection and proportion to the grace of the motherhood, as they are to the graces through which the supernatural life is completed. Assuredly, when the grace of the motherhood is taken in its entire extent and to its root, as the marriage of Mary with the Logos, achieved simultaneously with her creation, little room for any acquiring or disposing activity is to be found because of this grace, as little as in the humanity of Christ with regard to the hypostatic union.

There is room for such activity only because of the completion of this marriage and the actual conception of Christ. In this respect it can perhaps be said also that, on the ground of the already existing marriage and of the dignity of the bride of God which is based on it, the meritorious actions of Mary with regard to the conception of Christ work in a manner analogous though not similar to those of other saints with regard to the blessed union with God.

Regarding the merits of Mary, St. Thomas says: "The Blessed Virgin is said to have merited to bear the Lord of all, not because she merited His becoming man, but because through grace given her she merited such a degree of purity and sanctity that she could fittingly be the mother of God."⁶ From the liturgical "merited" a real

⁶ St. Thomas, IIIa, q.2, a.11 ad 3 (it is an allusion to the closing antiphon of the daily prayer of the breviary in the Easter season: *Regina coeli*).

merit can still less be deduced, as it is often used only in the sense of "to allow" or "to be deemed worthy." Compare the *Exsultet* of Holy Saturday: "*O happy fault that merited such and so great a Redeemer!*"⁷

With the foregoing as a standard, the frequent utterances of the Fathers must be understood in the proper sense when it is said, in connection with the text "the king shall greatly desire thy beauty,"⁸ that Mary through her beauty has made the Son of God descend into her bosom.⁹

Let us now consider the grace of the motherhood in view of its principle, that is, the divine predestination, and the relation to its subject brought about thereby.

Like all other supernatural graces the divine motherhood finds its principle in a benevolent, divine election and predestination. The predestination to the grace of the motherhood, in view of which Mary is called in a special manner "vessel of election," is distinguished from every other divine predestination. It is thus distinguished not only with regard to the excellence of the contents and the salutary import of this grace, but also because of the relation of this grace to its subject, as it is meant and brought about through the predestination.

This predestination is unlike the predestination to grace and glory, included in the general will of salvation. It in no way possesses a hypothetical character whereby its realization would be made dependent on the actual accomplishment of the requisite acts on Mary's part, or

⁷ See also A. Van Hove, "Per quam meruimus auctorem vitae suscipere," in *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza), XXXVIII (1935), 193-95.

⁸ Ps. 44:12.

⁹ Cf. Ballerini, *Sulloge monumentorum ad mysterium conceptionis immaculatae Virginis Deiparae illustrandum* (2 vols., Rome, 1854, 1856), I, 144; II, 153.

the omission of the contradictory acts without making sure in advance that these acts were really performed or omitted. Analogous with the predestination of the humanity of Christ to the hypostatic union, it has a much more unconditional and irrevocable character. All theologians accept this or are bound to accept it. For they all teach that, even before any personal activity, Mary was enriched with a measure of grace specifically calculated for her divine motherhood, and that the so-called *confirmatio in gratia* is included in this.

This quality of predestination is easily explained. Before one condition could be fulfilled on Mary's part, thus making it simply an anticipating grace, she was from the outset in a spiritual relation of marriage to God. This must either be contrary to His will, or be so willed as to receive its full realization. The end of this relationship (that is, the bringing about of the Incarnation, the redemption and completion of the world through a maternal cooperation) is willed absolutely by God. Likewise it must also hold true in the maintaining and consummation of this relation in the particular person whom God associates with Himself to actualize these ends. This person, therefore, was not simply elected as subject, but as co-principle of the redemption and of grace.

Since God willed human marriage to be an indissoluble union, with much more reason should He will the same for this divine marriage. Through the contracting of this marriage He bound Himself, in the same way as does the bridegroom in a human marriage, to prevent its dissolution by every means in His power.

This being presupposed, we may add, and the Church favors this view, that in God's notion of creation, through

which He called into being the person of Mary, we find inseparably connected the existence of this person and her destiny as Mother of God, or rather her existence in the quality of motherly bride of God.

What we have just said holds also in the sense that in this idea, besides the decree to call this person into being, there existed also in the mind of God from all eternity the design of making her immediately and forever the bride of God. It holds also in this sense, that the decree to give existence to this person was organically connected with the decree to call the bride of God into existence. That is, it is intrinsically conditioned and stipulated through this; therefore it existed only in and through this decree, and without this it would not have come into existence. Thus it was also formally directed to it to give Mary existence as the bride of God.

It is with this as with the bringing about of a member through the working of nature or of God: the insight to give existence to the member is conditioned and stipulated through the insight of its union with the head or with the spirit. The appointment of Mary to the divine brideship also must be imagined from the point of view of an original union with the Creator, to be fulfilled by Himself.

Hence Mary's existence was actualized only as the existence of the bride of God; and so we must say that Mary is created not only in this state as bride, but also particularly for this state as bride. In virtue of the act of creation she appears as bride: *creatione assumpta et assumendo creata*. And she has this distinguishing mark of her person as a distinguishing mark grown together with her personal existence, not indeed by virtue of the

composition of her being but in virtue of her origin from God.

The meaning and soundness of this thought are evident from the idea of the Church relative to Mary as contrasted with Eve, and also as the reflection of the incarnate Wisdom. This thought is linked up with the association of Mary with Christ in the same divine decree, indicated in the protevangelium, through which was fixed the redemption of fallen man by a new, perfect human couple and the effusion in time of the eternal Wisdom, arisen from God.

The divine decree through which Eve was destined to be the bride of the natural ancestor of the whole human race and mother of all mankind, evidently did not simply stand beside the decree to which she owes her existence. It ruled and stipulated this latter so that the latter would not have come about without the former, from which it also received its direction. For the aim of the Creator in the creation of Eve was nothing more than to give Adam a "help like unto himself."

As Eve was created in bodily dependence on Adam, she was, in virtue of the creation, also placed in community of body with him. However, Adam was not thought of by God simply as a being for himself alone, but as one whole with Eve through which the image of God was fully realized and the complete principle of the human race was brought about. The relationship to Adam, which lay in the divine idea of Eve, can therefore be thus expressed since Eve's coming into being was fixed by the same divine decree as the coming into existence of Adam.

When further the Church in her liturgy draws an

analogy between the origin of Mary and that of the incarnate Wisdom, the likeness is to be found first and foremost in this: as seat or vessel of wisdom, Mary is created entirely in and for the union as bride with the Logos, analogously as the humanity of Christ is created entirely in and for the hypostatic union. The physical being also of Christ's humanity was here determined and actualized by the same decree as that through which its hypostatic union with the Logos and the external manifestation of the Logos were fixed and realized.

In the bull *Ineffabilis* the intrinsic justification of this parallel is brought back to this, that the "*origin of the Blessed Virgin was prescribed by one and the same decree as was the incarnation of the divine Wisdom.*"¹⁰ These words can mean only that the very existence of Mary was set by God *per modum unius* and in an analogous manner with the existence of the flesh of the incarnate Wisdom.

This unity of the divine decree appears evident from the protevangeliū. There "the woman and her seed" are promised as a new human couple bringing salvation; like the original couple they thus appear as one whole in the mind of God. Yet, in a certain sense the unity of the decree is still more certain in this case than in the other since Mary here receives existence not as an organic supplement only, but also as a material preparation for the existence of Christ or as *inchoatis Christi*. As for origin and being, she stands in an analogous mutual relation to Christ, as the heart to the head in a bodily organism.

Between the origin of Mary, on the one side, and that

¹⁰ Pius IX, bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, December 8, 1854. See *Acta et Decreta conciliorum recentium . . . collectio Lacensis*, Freiburg, 1870, Vol. VI.

of Eve (or of Christ) on the other, there certainly exists this difference, that Mary according to her entire being did not receive her existence through a direct divine act, but through human procreation. Yet the human procreation is not the producing principle of the spiritual soul and does not define which soul shall be infused into the body which it formed. For the spiritual soul does not obtain its individuality from the body, but instead communicates thereto its own individuality. On the contrary, as through creation God infuses souls and in them the personal principle, He also defines which soul He wishes to infuse, or which soul will come into existence in connection with the human procreation. Hence He can also allow Himself to be guided in the creation of a particular soul by the view to create the latter, not simply as all others in the execution and carrying through of the natural order to finish a fruit and member of the human race. He can also grant it existence in virtue of the decree to establish through Christ and in Christ a new and higher order and to join to Christ a person who, in bridal organic unity with Him, will be the principle and foundation of this order. However, what prevails with the creation of the soul as a personal principle, prevails also with the entire person.

The Fathers often express the thoughts here expounded, when they call Mary a "temple" specially built by God for Himself, or a "tree" specially planted by God to produce a truly holy fruit. These figures are graphic and intelligible. Yet they do not exclude in advance the meaning that medieval opponents of Mary's immaculate conception attached to it, namely, that God combined with the creation of Mary the view to ordain her "later

as His temple or to grant her the ennoblement necessary to her supernatural fecundity. For, with a material temple the consecration certainly follows the building of it, and with a plant the cultivation follows the planting. As for the members, their formation and union with the head, or the spirit, coincide with each other or have inward connection with each other.

Furthermore, Mary's origin must be imagined in relation to that of Christ in an analogous manner as the forming of the central member in an organism, that is, the heart, which in virtue of the view and working of the forming principle stands in inner relation to the forming of the head and connection with it. This analogy, previously discussed, gives in general the clearest and most perfect image of the inner connection of Mary's entire being with that of Christ, both in the divine thought and in its realization. It also embraces perfectly the other two since for the head in its corporal aspect the heart is the root as much as, in the other sense, it is the dwelling for the spirit of the head.

As already remarked, all that is essential in this idea has been laid down by the Church in her liturgical application of the Sapiential books to Mary. With regard to the origin of Wisdom in the above-quoted words of the bull *Ineffabilis*, this application is correctly based on the unity of the decree.

The three expressions describing the egress of Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs, "He possessed me," or "He made me," "I was set up" or "I was anointed," and "I was brought forth," or "I was born"¹¹ may in particular be applied to the individual elements which come under

¹¹ Prov. 8:22-25.

consideration in Mary's origin. To these expressions answer the following in Mary's origin: her creation, marriage, or union, and, from the mutual relation of both, the origin of a being which, in an altogether special way, may and must be considered as born of God.

Not less strikingly are these various elements clearly united in the figure of the light-cloud,¹² whether imagined as "coming out of the mouth of the Most High" or as formed from the waters of the earth together with the light of the heavens.

THE PERFECTION OF THE DISTINGUISHING MARK OF MARY'S PERSON

Let us now consider the formal perfection of the supernatural distinguishing mark of Mary's person, constituted through the grace of the divine motherhood. It may be summarized thus: As the most perfect analogous case of the *gratia unionis* in Christ, the grace of the motherhood makes Mary a person of supernatural nature or order, in the same way as Christ is constituted a truly divine person through the grace of the union, it therefore forms also in Mary the ground of supernatural privileges, as does the grace of the union in the humanity of Christ.

It could be said that this distinguishing mark of her person, as contrasted with the other one in creatures, even with that of human marriage, is not purely an accidental relation or a *relatio rationis*. In a measure it is a hypostatic, substantial, or essential distinguishing mark, that is, such a distinguishing mark as is due to a subject through his relation with a higher principle which dwells in him, with him is grown to a whole, and through which

¹² Ecclus. 24:5 f.; Wisd. 7:25.

his dignity and perfection are defined, as his substantial individuality is.

The grace of the divine motherhood is, analogous to the grace of the union, of itself a substantial, or rather the substantial grace. Essentially it is nothing else than the divine being of her Son, granted to the mother and infused into her.

Further, the grace of the motherhood is a substantial grace in a second sense, since the divine person is connected also in a substantial or physical manner with Mary, analogously as He is with Christ, that is, grown together with her through taking root, and hence dwelling bodily in her.

Moreover, this substantial grace is bestowed on Mary at the outset of her origin and also forever. Through it she is, from her creation and in virtue of her origin, also assumed into the person of the Logos as His bride in such a way that she exists only in and through her relation to the divine person of her Son. And this relation conditions and defines her entire existence.

This idea of the person and being of Mary finds its expression in the figure in the Apocalypse, the woman clothed with the sun, in the typical figure of the light-cloud, and in Mary's honorary title in the Church, *vas spirituale*, i.e., dwelling, instrument, and image of the spiritual substance of the Logos. As such she is symbolically represented by the light-cloud itself, and also as contrasted with Christ, still more so by the ark of the covenant, filled and enshrouded with the magnificence of the Lord.

In these figures and expressions Mary appears through the grace of her motherhood as a being altogether heav-

enly and spiritual. Under the form of an indwelling, enveloping, and penetrating light or spirit, the grace itself is given prominence as a higher principle which, with its substance, its force, and its influence, interiorly adorns, enriches, magnifies, and spiritualizes the subject connected with it and penetrated by it.

Since this principle is the divine Spirit and therefore the Holy Ghost, the subject also in which He dwells becomes a completely holy being, an *ens sacrum et sanctum*, and thereby in the fullest meaning a *persona sancta et sacra*.

We say an *ens sacrum et sanctum*. By virtue of her consecration through the *gratia unionis*, Mary is sanctified in a manner all her own, analogously as the humanity of Christ is through the hypostatic union. Therefore the *gratia consecrans* is with her also *gratia sanctificans* and *gratum faciens*, analogous to that through which the man Christ is made the Anointed of the Lord and the holy and well-beloved Child of God. The *gratia consecrans* of itself virtually and formally, i.e., as root and soul of habitual grace, makes its subject holy and pleasing to God.

This whole concept of the motherhood, which is based on the analogy of the *gratia unionis*, is reflected by the Fathers when they explain the expression with which the angel addressed Mary, "full of grace." This they do by treating it as the distinguishing mark of her person, as the name of Christ is with her Son.

By the expression "full of grace" as applied to Mary, they mean in the first place the grace of the motherhood, as by the "anointing of Christ" they understand the anointing of the hypostatic union. Therefore they trace the unique loftiness of the person of Mary, not less than that

of the man Christ, to a "bodily indwelling of the entire fullness of the Godhead."¹³

These same names still maintain the essential difference existing between "the one, full of grace" and "the Anointed" of God. For, by the name "full of grace" we are to understand that Mary, besides being endowed with the highest fullness of grace, is also all that she is by the grace of God, and not of herself. The name "Christ," however, according to the explanation already given in the beginning of the Canticle of Canticles, finds its full meaning in the fact that Christ is anointed by Himself and is the effused oil itself.¹⁴ In other words, Christ, as "Word incarnate," constituted through the mingling of the independent oil of the Logos with the flesh, is in His own essence "divine" and "God," and therefore also "the holy of God" and the "vivifying spirit." On the contrary, "the one full of grace," as "bride of the Word incarnate," clothed and filled with the light of the Godhead, is according to her entire being a creature, and hence only the "dwelling" of God, and as such only the "sanctuary of God" and "spiritual vessel."

As Mary is truly Θεοτόκος and therefore not only θεοδόχος in the Nestorian sense, we must say that to her is due in full truth the distinguishing mark of her person, which the Nestorians wrongly applied to Christ, namely, the distinguishing mark of ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος (*homo deifer*) connected with the Logos through συνάφεια and κόλλησις, not through κρᾶσις; and indeed so that this distinguishing mark is still more true and full in the *mulier deifera* than it

¹³ See Passaglia, *op. cit.*, nos. 1033 f.

¹⁴ Cant. 1:2: *oleum effusum nomen tuum*. The name of Christ (= Messias) is equivalent to "the Anointed" by pre-eminence.

would be the case in a *vir deifer* without the hypostatic union.

The same analogy and difference are pointed out by the Fathers, in particular by the Greek Fathers, in the name with which they indicate the distinguishing mark of the person of Christ and of Mary, from the viewpoint of divine sonship and daughterhood, i.e., as a relation of connection with God, given in and with their origin from God. Christ, by virtue of His constitutive anointing with the Logos, is in a unique manner "offshoot" and member of God's family, and, in this respect, is pre-eminently called *Puer Dei* and *Agnus Dei*. So Mary, by reason of her unique endowment with the fullness of grace, is pre-eminently called the *puella* and the *Aga Dei*. The *Puer Dei* is no one else but the Son of God, brought forth from all eternity in the bosom of God as fruit of His being, born into the world in time. The *puella Dei*, however, is brought forth by God only as a child of eternal election, as fruit of His love and as bride of His Son.

In regard to the figure of the Apocalypse (the woman clothed with the sun), through which these thoughts are graphically represented in connection with the kindred figure of the light-cloud, St. Bernard says: "How intimate thou art with Him, Domina, how close; how greatly thou hast merited to be the intimate, how much grace thou hast found with Him! He remains in thee and thou remainest in Him: thou vestest Him and art vested by Him. Thou clothest Him with the substance of thy flesh, and He clothes thee with the glory of His majesty. Thou clothest the sun with a cloud, and thou art clothed by the same sun." Also: "By right Mary is called the one clothed with the sun, the one who penetrated beyond the deepest

abyss of the divine Wisdom, more than can be believed, so that, as much as such a position of a creature is permitted without a personal union, she seems immersed in that inaccessible light." ¹⁵

Hence it is a rather weak, one-sided, and even completely wrong conception, if, as often happens, the grace of the divine motherhood, considered in the abstract and by itself, apart from the *gratia habitualis*, is simply placed among the *gratiae gratis datae*; as if it were a position to be used only for the benefit of others. The least it can be considered is a *gratia consecrans*—in the nature of the sacramental distinguishing mark—which includes a special relation of the person endowed with grace, to Christ, and therefore enables such a one to obtain sanctifying grace and communicates the possession of it.

But even this analogy does not suffice. For the grace of the divine motherhood consists, according to its innermost essence, in a wholly unique possession of the uncreated grace.

He who in this sense denies to the grace of the motherhood the quality of a grace which, of itself and as such, next to and above habitual grace, sanctifies and makes pleasing to God, must also refuse this claim in regard to the *gratia unionis* in Christ, not to mention the *gratia inhabitationis Spiritus Sancti*. Otherwise he denies the matter with words only. As maternal bride of God, Mary, to whom He has given His Son as her Son and bridegroom, possesses a special and holy dignity and is dear to God beloved of Him in a unique manner. Moreover, the act and state of sin, even of venial sin, are inconsistent with her motherhood. Anyone who concedes these truths

¹⁵ St. Bernard, *Serm. Dom. infra Oct. Ass.*, PL, CLXXXIII, 431.

can hardly deny that the grace which makes her the mother, bears the character of a *forma sanctificans* and *gratum faciens*.

For this very reason most theologians dealt firmly with this formula. Its meaning was questioned because it was not put in the form here given, and because the representation brought into vogue by Ripalda and afterward defended by Christophorus Vega,¹⁶ was indeed unfortunate and placed the matter in a wrong light. What these theologians passed off for *forma sanctificans* was not what we have called the "grace of the motherhood," to which this quality precisely belongs because it is analogous to the *gratia unionis* in Christ. It was rather the maternal relation to Christ, regarded physiologically only, as following formally from the cooperation of Mary with the producing and birth of Christ, or from the fact that Christ's humanity was bodily grown together with His mother. To the *forma sanctificans* thus construed are ascribed all the operations of the *gratia habitualis* (which includes the immediate dignity of the beatific vision and its merit) in such a way that these effects also exist even were sanctifying grace unavailable.

The first is a shifting and restriction of the essence of the grace of the motherhood, which certainly does not bear in it any longer the character of a *forma sanctificans*; neither does it elucidate the deep and real reason of Mary's maternal dignity. The second is an exaggeration of the effects of this grace, which is not admissible even when correctly understood. The grace of the motherhood, as sanctifying grace, motivates the dignity of the beatific

¹⁶ Ripalda, *De ente supernaturali*, disp. 79 (ed. Vives, 1871), III, 72-144; Christ. Vega, *Theol. Mar.*, palaestra 26.

vision and the ability to obtain it; but thereby it is not said that it must and could do so adequately, of itself alone, without the intervention and influence of the *gratia habitualis* which it has as result. Therefore we definitely repudiate a *forma sanctificans* built up in this way from the divine motherhood, but we are of the opinion that the arguments against it do not at all concern our concept.

Furthermore, the truth of the concept which is the point at issue appears still more clearly from what follows. Since the distinguishing mark of her person must be ascribed to a particular union of Mary with the Holy Ghost, He must be thought of as the principle of her sanctity in an analogous way as He is the principle of the sanctity of the Church. For the Church, regarded as an organic whole or as a principle of sanctification, has no other formal principle of its sanctity than the Holy Ghost Himself.

From what follows, the difference will also appear more clearly between the substantial *forma sanctificans* in Christ and in Mary.

MARY, THE COUNTERPART OF EVE AND THE PROTOTYPE OF THE CHURCH

The most concrete and accurate definition of the supernatural distinguishing mark of Mary's person is its likeness to and difference from the distinguishing mark of the person of Christ. This truth follows from the fact that, according to the general and current conception of the Church, Mary is the counterpart of Eve and the prototype of the Church.

As counterpart of Eve, Mary is to the heavenly and spiritual Adam what Eve herself was to the earthly Adam

endowed merely with a soul, "a help like unto himself."¹⁷ That is, Eve was a personal likeness of himself, placed at his side, just as he himself was a likeness of God. But it is a likeness which as "help like unto himself" has an entirely particular form in which it expresses his common nature, formed according to God's image. Eve was such a likeness of Adam only through the fact that she also was constituted through a spiritual soul. In like manner the heavenly and spiritual Eve can there appear as a likeness of the heavenly and spiritual Adam, only when she is understood as imbued with a divine principle.

She appears in such a light when considered as taken possession of by the divine Logos in and with His divine nature, and as filled with His divinity. In this respect, however, full justice is not done to the distinguishing mark of the bride as of an independent person who resembles the person of the bridegroom and at the same time represents his being under a special form. On the contrary, this likeness comes out clearly and vividly when the distinguishing mark of Mary's person is sought in her quality of a living and personal bearer and representative (dwelling, vessel, instrument, garment, and image); in other words, as temple of the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Logos; or again, were the mark seen in the fact that, in a manner equally special though not nearly as complete, she forms one person with the Holy Ghost who informs and animates her, just as the human nature of Christ forms one person with the Logos.

In this respect Mary at once appears not only as a person by herself next to Christ, but also, in this state, as a person similarly constituted, yet forming a special

¹⁷ Gen. 2:18: *faciamus ei adiutorium simile sibi.*

type. Toward the Logos the Holy Ghost represents the divine nature in the same manner as the woman represents the human nature next to the man. In like manner both these types unite in Mary as the woman animated by the Holy Ghost to a supernatural figure of the heavenly and spiritual Eve, in a manner analogous, in Christ, to the "type" of the Logos and that of the man uniting to form the type of the heavenly and spiritual Adam.

The meaning of this viewpoint becomes still more important as through it the subordination and relation to Christ can also be defined more clearly and significantly.

The subordination as "bride" appears the more clearly from the fact that Christ is really and immediately anointed in the Logos—the source of the Holy Ghost—and hence is Himself the principle of the Holy Ghost. On the contrary, like other created persons endowed with grace, Mary possesses in the Holy Ghost only a substantial principle of holiness which proceeds from the Logos and dwells in her through grace. Therefore the relation as bride to Christ appears here under this form: Mary is united with Christ through a product which is co-independent with Him in the divinity which proceeds from His godhead and dwells in her as a supernatural principle of her being and life.

A double advantage lies in this. On the one hand, this relation is of itself conceived under a more sublime point of view than when it is only traced to Mary and Christ as bodily grown together; for it appears conspicuously as caused by a spiritual and divine tie. On the other hand, it is quite naturally brought into closest connection with the origin of Mary. For the Holy Ghost, who was infused into Mary together with the creation of her soul as *costa*

Verbi, as Methodius calls Him, places Mary in a relation to Christ similar to that in which Eve stood to Adam by having been formed from his rib.¹⁸

Finally, a double likeness with Christ, or with His sacred humanity, answers to this double quality of the relation of Mary to Christ, from the viewpoint of the relationship of the distinguishing mark of person to its subject.

On the one hand, the specific relation to God which forms the distinguishing mark of Mary's person when it is understood as union with the Holy Ghost, is noted as one in which the soul of Mary is connected with God by means of her body, and also, and that primarily and originally, her body through the soul. Therefore it is connected with God through the medium of the soul. At the same time it is understood that the influence of the distinguishing mark of Mary's person, in view of the qualities and activities of its subject, which are based on it, had to assert itself chiefly and first in and through the soul of Mary.

On the other hand, the distinguishing mark of Mary's person, understood thus, may more easily be conceived as a distinguishing mark that was present from the beginning of her existence before the conception of Christ, and later also, after the birth of Christ, and which actually continued during the entire duration of her existence.

The soundness and meaning of this idea of the distinguishing mark of Mary's person appears still more clearly from the fact that the supernatural essence of the Church,

¹⁸ St. Methodius, *Convivium decem virginum*, lib. 3, c. 8; PG, XVIII, 73.

whose prototype and root Mary is, is represented in the language and concept of the Church herself precisely according to this type.

This is evident in the individual members of the Church. As temples, animated by the Holy Ghost, they are understood as being in such unity with Him that He Himself "prays in them with unutterable sighs."¹⁹ It is still much more obvious in the Church, so far as the Church as bride of Christ and mother of Christians stands between Christ and His spiritual children; and also so far as the Church as a supernatural and heavenly principle, arisen from the side of Christ,²⁰ similar and equivalent to Him, forms an *adjutorium simile* which assists Him.

In the Catholic concept, the Church is such a principle as bearer and representative, i.e., dwelling, instrument, and image, or as temple of the Holy Ghost. This must be understood in the sense that the Holy Ghost not only influences her through His working, but forms with her one undivided whole and is embraced in her composition as her soul.²¹ In other words it is as a kind of incarnation of the Holy Ghost with whom therefore she shares His symbolic name of being: *columba Dei*.

This concept is particularly essential to prevent the vaporizing to a mere personification of our imagination the sublime and significant idea, according to which the Church is conceived as a supernatural, substantial, and

¹⁹ Rom. 8:26; cf. v. 15.

²⁰ See the material from tradition collected by Seb. Tromp, S.J., "De nativ. Ecclesiae e Corde Jesu in cruce" in *Gregorianum*, XIII (1932), 489-527.

²¹ For patristic material see Seb. Tromp, *De Spiritu Sancto anima Corporis mystici*, 2 fasc., *Textus et Documenta* (Univ. Gregor.), nos. 1 and 7, Rome, 1932, and *Corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia*, Rome, 1937.

personal being, or, with Methodius, as *virtus subsistens*.²² Indeed the Church has a supernatural essence and existence only so far as the Holy Ghost is her Spirit and completes her in Himself, in a way analogous to the way the human spirit perfects the human body. In many a title ascribed to the Church, particularly when she is represented as an acting subject distinct from all her members and at the same time something absolute and holy in herself, she steps forward as rising, so to say, in the Holy Ghost and identical with Him. This is analogous to the way, in the natural man, the body as an animated body, and the spirit as the animating principle of the body, are bound up in each other and are identical with each other.

When the Church, therefore, as a supernatural principle, finds the prototype in the supernatural distinguishing mark of the essence and existence of Mary, then this distinguishing mark of person must certainly be looked for in an analogous relation to the Holy Ghost and in unity with Him. In the Church, however, only human nature in general or as a unity of race, or the social organism of a visible union, is manifest as the bearer of the Holy Ghost. Therefore the idea of the Church is in no individual of that nature and in no separate member of that organism so realized that he stands to the Holy Ghost in a way analogous to that of the humanity of Christ to the Logos, and is thus animated by the Holy Ghost in his entire being and is His instrument for this entire, super-

²² This is probably an allusion to the text of St. Methodius, *Convivium*, lib. 8, c. 5; PG, XVIII, 145 (application of Apoc. 12:1 f. to the Church). See also Jac. Farges, *Les idées morales et religieuses de Méthode d'Olympe* (Paris, 1929), p. 143.

natural activity. But Mary is for that very reason the prototype of the Church, as the idea of the Church is originally realized in her person and in the most perfect manner. Since she herself belongs to the Church and at the same time forms the head-member as root and heart, the idea of the Church as a supernatural principle assisting Christ also obtains its full, concrete, and living figure.

Furthermore, when the Church is considered the mystical body of Christ or *caro Verbi in carne Christi co-assumpta et conrepleta a Verbo*, and in this quality is placed in relation to Christ as her Head and to the Logos as her spirit, she is, as known, quite naturally so conceived that she is not, like the Head, immediately animated by the Spirit, i.e., the essence of being of the Logos, but by the Holy Ghost as the breath of life which proceeds from the spirit and spreads over the body.

Accordingly Mary also, as a member of the mystical body of Christ and as *caro coassumpta et conrepleta a Verbo*, must be thought of in a special manner as animated by the Holy Ghost and not by the Logos. As head-member of the body she stands to the Head as well as to the other members in a way like that of the heart. In the human organism the heart is the bearer, organ, and representative of the vivifying functions, as the head is that of the spiritual functions and influences of the spiritual soul. Hence Mary also must be considered from this point of view as bearer, organ, and representative of the Holy Ghost who proceeds from the Logos.

Once again it appears here especially, how clearly Mary, through this concept of the distinguishing mark of the person, is distinguished from Christ and from the

rest of men. For by it she appears at the side of Christ as a supernatural being above other men, and toward Christ she stands with the rest of mankind as a natural being dependent on the influence of His grace.

CHAPTER XI

The Source of Mary's Dignity¹

THE assumption into the divine person of the Logos, given to the human nature of Christ through the grace of the union, is the highest distinction that was and could be granted to a created nature. Likewise the distinguishing mark of person contained in the divine motherhood is also the highest distinction with which a created person can be endowed. For there is no higher function of a creature than the immediate bodily and spiritual co-operation in the most sublime work of God; neither does there exist a more perfect association with God, and certainly no more perfect appropriation of God to the creature, than through the "divine marriage" which forms the essence of the grace of the divine motherhood.

Hence the Mother of God is, next to Christ, the most sublime work of God and also the noblest and most worthy person in the created world; to the extent that in nobility and dignity she surpasses, beyond comparison, all other persons, however filled with grace. Rightly named, therefore, is this loftiness of her nobility and dignity when it is called infinite, not indeed in an absolute sense, yet in a very real sense. Infinite it is so far as it contains such a participation in the essentially infinite dignity of God, or resembles it so closely that, apart from

¹ Literature as in the former chapter, and Passaglia, *op. cit.*, sec. 1, and especially sec. 6, c. 4; Haine, *De hyperdulia*, Louvain, 1864.

God Himself, no higher is imaginable, neither can it be equaled or measured through any other dignity possible to a created person.

The entire unique sublimity and dignity ² of the Mother of God is often exalted by the Fathers in the most enthusiastic expressions, particularly through comparison with that of the highest heavenly spirits.³

When St. Thomas in a certain passage quite simply says that Mary is the most perfect mother imaginable, as the beatific vision according to its essence is the most perfect knowledge, he does not intend by that to exclude what he explains in another place, that Mary, precisely as the most perfect mother, is also simply the most sublime created person.⁴

The comparison of the divine motherhood, in respect to the dignity which is based on it, with the sanctifying grace and the dignity of the state of the adopted children resting on it, can cause difficulties only when one conceives the motherhood inadequately as a physiological relation between mother and child, or as an office, and one makes an entire abstraction of it, that the sanctifying grace is morally of necessity connected with it.

On the contrary it is not enough to say that Mary's state as adopted child is necessarily connected with her motherhood. For, as bridal unity with the Son of God and as possession of this Son, based on a divine appropriation, the motherhood includes the positive contents of the

² *Excellentia, nobilitas, dignitas.*

³ Cf. the passages quoted in Hurter, *Theologiae Dogm. Comp.* (Innsbruck, 1877), II, 376 ff., thesis 155; Haine, *op. cit.*, Part I, chap. 1; Passaglia, *op. cit.*, sec. 1 and sec. 6, c. 1 and 4.

⁴ St. Thomas, IIIa, q. 27, a. 5 ad 2; *In I Sent.*, dist. 44, q. unic., a. 3 corp. See also Conrad. Saxon., *Speculum B.M.V.*, lect. 10 (ed. by Quaracci, 1904, p. 134).

state of adoption in itself and in an eminent manner, partly virtual and partly formal. Moreover, it defines the filial relation of Mary to God so that it is really more than a common state of adoption; for it shares in a particular way the inherent nature of the essentially divine state of Christ as child and son.

Formally and adequately taken as God's bridal motherhood, the divine motherhood in its concrete realization also implies the most vivid bridal relation of Mary to God. Hence no difficulty is presented by these utterances of the Fathers in which the physiological side of the motherhood and Mary's union of love with God are so compared that this latter is prominent as a more sanctifying good than the former. When, e.g., St. Augustine says: "Mary was happier when she conceived with her mind than with her womb . . . she carried it more happily in her heart than in her body,"⁵ he does not simply contrast the motherhood of Mary with her spiritual, moral perfection; he merely places one element in the functions of the motherhood opposite another which, in reality, is connected with it and which, according to the same Augustine, precedes it as a condition: "she conceived first with her mind and then with her body."

Venerable Bede says: "And the same Mother of God and thence happy indeed, because she is made the temporal mistress of the incarnate Word, but thence much happier because she remained the eternal keeper of the Word to love Him forever."⁶ He thus simply places a passing, maternal activity in contrast with the permanent,

⁵ Cf. St. Augustine, *Serm.* 215, no. 4; *PL*, XXXVIII, 1078: *Maria fide plena Christum prius mente quam ventre concepit.*

⁶ St. Bede, *In Luc.*, lib. 4, c. 11; *PL*, XCII, 480.

spiritual union of the mother with the Son, which is merely the continuation of the maternal love with which Mary has exercised her temporal *ministerium*.

As to the dignity of the Mother of God being infinite, see St. Thomas *In I Sent.*, dist. 44, a. 3. St. Albert the Great says: "The Son adorns His mother with an infinite excellence; an infinite excellence in the fruit discloses an infinite excellence in the tree."[†] This latter expression is significant, but can also be easily misunderstood. It would be false if it meant that the godhead, i.e., the excellence of the fruit, finds its adequate and most intimate principle, from which it is drawn, in Mary's inner constitution or condition. The true meaning is more nearly this: in virtue of the conception of the *semen divinum* from which this fruit is produced, the infinite excellence of the fruit premises such a union of the mother with the godhead dwelling in her, that through it the godhead itself becomes the principle and the measure of the excellence of the mother.

Compared with the rest of mankind, the unique excellence of Mary, wrought through the grace of her motherhood, may thus be modified so that one discovers in it a community and likeness with those privileges through which the excellent position of Christ is characterized as contrasted with creatures. This may happen under a threefold aspect, according as one considers Mary next to, with, and immediately after Christ: (1) as standing in an eminent likeness and a community with God simply apart from all other beings and above them: transcendental position; (2) as a member of mankind and of the

[†] St. Albert the Great, *Mariale*, q. 197.

universe in general: imminent position; (3) as a link between creature and Creator: central position.

THE TRANSCENDENTAL POSITION OF MARY

In her transcendental position, by virtue of the grace of the motherhood, Mary appears next to, with, and immediately after Christ in such an eminent way as the image and likeness of God, that the Church does not hesitate to apply to her the scriptural descriptions relative to the eternal Wisdom as the image and likeness of God, which stands apart from all creatures and above them.

Accordingly a participation in the *gloria et virtus* of the divine persons, a certain *communicatio idiomatum divinorum*, takes place with Mary, analogously as with Christ, in such a unique manner as with no other creature, to whatever extent they are endowed with grace.

For that reason, however, the title of *dea* may not be ascribed to the Mother of God. Although she really more closely resembles God and is more connected with Him than they who are called gods in Holy Writ, yet what is exceptional with her in her likeness and community with God would precisely cause the danger in understanding this name in a pagan sense according to which *dea* and *deus* are substantially on a par.

For the same reason Mary may not be called *persona divina* or "divine being" or "divine woman" or "divine virgin"; although in the last case this happens in Latin under the form *diva*. One must rather characterize her "divine" character through other expressions, as: the holy, glorious, heavenly Virgin.

On the contrary she is, analogously to Christ as man, the "holy child of God." Hence there lies also in the divine state as child a particular reflection of the divine daughterhood of the eternal Wisdom toward God the Father. In the person of the Logos, and thus in the man Christ also, this really coincides with His divine sonship and is absorbed therein. But in the Holy Ghost, and thus in Mary also, it is represented through the relation as *columna Dei*, arising from the breath of the divine love, a relation which specifically differs from the sonship.

The name "daughter of God the Father," based on this reflection of the daughterhood of the eternal Wisdom, and understood in the sense defined through it, is the most excellent and powerful, and yet the most conceivable and simple of divine titles with which we can sum up the magnificence of Mary above all creatures. It contains all the divine attributes that may be applied to Mary, and gives them their clear and simple meaning and their suitable form.

The specific meaning of this name is first of all that Mary in her origin from the breath of the divine love, i.e., from the vivifying power of God, appears through His loving decree as a spiritual living being. By virtue of this origin she is herself as it were a divine breath through which the Word, produced in the heart of the Father, must be born and be clothed in the flesh assumed by Him and animated by Him.

This name, therefore, contains a likeness of Mary with the substantial "breath of God," the Holy Ghost; and indeed in that quality and function through which His position in the Trinity, belonging to Him in virtue of His origin from God, is most beautifully characterized and

in which He preferably stands forth as the "dove" arising from God.

With regard to such a divine daughterhood, Mary is consequently, analogous to the eternal Wisdom, rightly called in contrast with all creatures the only and the first-born daughter of God. The only born, for such a daughter does not belong to any other creature; the first-born, for in virtue of the special character of this daughterhood Mary is not only the first in rank among all the children of God, but also the mother of all others.

Analogous to the eternal Wisdom Himself, Mary, as daughter of God, is also the first-born of the entire creation. In God's decree of creation she is intended, with the incarnate Wisdom, to be the end and completion of the works of God. The decree of creation which had in view her existence, was conditioned and defined through the will, not simply to produce things apart from God, but to send *ad extra* and to effuse the eternal Wisdom Himself.

For that very reason Mary, as daughter born of God, has above the other creatures of God who in time have been called from nothingness into being, a further privilege. Her origin supposes the eternal origin of the divine Wisdom and, in virtue of its organic connection with the appearing of this Wisdom *ad extra* in time, it is in God's thought connected in a particular manner with the eternal and internal origin of Wisdom.

From the excellent and divine daughterhood of Mary, or from her character contained therein as maternal bride of the Son of God, there easily follows the participation in certain divine attributes. We refer to the attributes in which the divine glory and power which are due to the eternal Wisdom in contrast with the rest of creatures in

virtue of His origin from God, are perfectly revealed with this Wisdom, that is, with the Son of God and the Holy Ghost. These titles are: with the Son of God and the Holy Ghost, *Dominus*, *Sanctus*, *Vivificator*; with the eternal Wisdom, in the sense of the description from the books of Wisdom, *Regina*, and *Mater omnium*.

Accordingly, in the language of the Church, Mary bears a series of names that agree with those already mentioned. These names are *Domina sancta*, particularly *Domina nostra*, *Regina mundi*, *coelorum*, *angelorum*; *Vita* or *Vivificatrix*, *Illuminatrix*, *Mater gratiae*, *Salus*, *Paracleta*, *Consolatrix*, etc.

The name *Domina* ("she who rules"), more correctly *Domina sancta*, corresponding to the *Dominus* of Christ, implies, in contrast to the state of servant, the right to joint enjoyment of the glory and bliss of God. This right is granted to the Mother of God in and with the person of her divine bridegroom and Son. A further sort of right is that of joint disposal of the goods of God in view of their distribution to others. Furthermore the title *Domina nostra* or *Dominatrix* implies the right to submissive veneration and obliging obedience on behalf of all creatures who depend on God. And rightly so, since Mary, next to God and Christ, is the end to which the entire rational and irrational creation is directed, as the irrational and earthly creation is to man.

The idea of *Vita*, *Vivificatrix*, or *Illuminatrix* implies that Mary, in virtue of the grace of her motherhood, is in a perfect manner the seat, bearer, and instrument of the principle of supernatural life and light of grace. This she is both for herself and for others. This principle rather exercises its influence as particularly dwelling in her, and

by her entering into relation with the rest of the world. Hence she is, next to God and Christ, the secondary principle of grace, and thereby of the supernatural complement of mankind and of the world in general.

Both ideas do not simply stand beside each other, as having the same basis and as represented together in the figure of the heavenly woman, clothed with the sun. They also define and penetrate each other. Therefore Mary is the more perfectly the *domina* of rational creatures as she is likewise the secondary principle of their supernatural light and life. Consequently she is the perfect secondary principle of this supernatural light and life, as she communicates the first principle of this life to the world as appropriated and belonging first and uniquely to herself; and also as, in this respect, she is not distinguished less from every other instrument of the distribution of grace, than through the physical activity with the producing and birth of Christ.

The ideas of *Domina* and *Vita* or *Illuminatrix* belong so much to the distinguishing mark of Mary's person and express its specific excellence so strikingly, that of old many writers sought to find those ideas expressed in the very name of "Mary": the first according to the Syrian derivation by the Syrian Fathers: the second according to the Hebrew explanation of St. Jerome. Both titles were united by some (e.g., Ephraem), with special stress on the highest likeness with God, contained therein: "After the Trinity she is the *Domina* of all; after the Paraclete she is another paraclete."⁸

The name of *Domina* with its various nuances is in use

⁸ St. Ephraem of Syria, *Oratio ad Deip.*, ed. by Assemani, graec.-lat., III, 528, cited by Passaglia, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, no. 1399.

in the older liturgies, and also with the Fathers,⁹ and in the sense explained is wholly dogmatic. St. John Damascene: "And thus Grace (the name of Anna signifies grace) brings forth the *Domina*, for this is expressed by the name Mary, because she is made truly the *Domina* of all creatures, when she appeared as mother of the Creator. . . . Indeed, she is properly the mother of God and the *Domina* and, appearing as both the handmaid and the mother of the Creator, she exercises authority over all creatures."¹⁰ Peter Chrysologus adds to the words of the angel: "Fear not, Mary": "Before the occasion the dignity of the Virgin is made known by the name; for she is called Mary in Hebrew, *Domina* in Latin. Thus the angel calls her *Domina* to remove the trepidation of servitude from the Lord's mother whom her own authority made and caused to be born as *Domina* and to be called *Domina* from her birth."¹¹

The title to this right contained in the attribute *Domina*, is the personal community of Mary with God, which lies in her divine state as bride and was completed through the infusion of the Logos in His conception. Thereby the infusion of the Logos into the Virgin can also be considered her anointing and appointment as *domina*.¹² On the ground of this first title there comes only as second into consideration the mutual communication, which agrees with the maternal activity with the

⁹ See Passaglia, *op. cit.*, sec. 6, c. 1, art. 1; Haine, *op. cit.*, pp. 125 f.

¹⁰ St. John Damascene, *De fide orth.*, Bk. IV, chap. 14; PG, XCIV, 1157, 1161.

¹¹ St. Peter Chrys., *Sermo* 142; PL, LII, 579.

¹² Scheeben refers here to the same place in Chrysologus. The latter sees in the announcement of the angel the solemn appointment of Mary as Queen, but gives at the same time to understand that she was this in fact from her birth.

loving care for the humanity of Christ, or the honor and love which belongs to the mother on behalf of her child.

As it would, therefore, be incorrect to consider the maternal influence on Christ as man as the main title, it would be still more incorrect to deduce from it a *dominium*, through which Mary would be *Domina Christi*, as it could appear in some zealous exaggerations of the *dominium* of Mary. Neither can the maternal authority of Mary over the humanity of Christ be called *dominium in Christum*, for even in contrast with ordinary people it is not really a *dominium*. Therefore by decree of the Holy Office (February 12, 1878) the Holy See forbade the attribute *Regina Cordis Jesu*, which in Poland had been so translated from the French *Notre Dame du Sacre Cœur*, and prohibited also those representations where the Child Jesus stands before the knees of the seated mother.

With regard to Christ, one can speak only of a belonging to Mary, whereby her participation in His goods and her dominion" over His subjects are founded as *condominium*. This belonging to and this *condominium* have entirely the form of the claim which the bride obtains toward the bridegroom, through her acceptance as bride and her services as bride. This idea extends to the farthest bounds. But it has some necessary restrictions inasmuch as the ideas of *domina* and handmaid do not exclude each other here, but rather blend together harmoniously in the idea of *ministra Dei*.

Neither does the idea of *dominium universale* of the Mother of God mean that she can exercise a jurisdiction over all persons or possess a proprietary right to all things; for this belongs no more to the right of the bride than to that of the mother. Furthermore, Mary's right in this re-

spect must not be measured simply according to the share of an earthly queen in the rule of a king, but rather as the participation of a mother in the family rights of the father.

The position of Mary next to Christ and under Him over all mere creatures, as she is characterized through the title *Domina*, appears strikingly through the union of the scriptural texts according to which Christ "sits" at the right hand of God on the latter's throne, the Queen "stands" at His right hand, the angels and saints "kneel" or "lie upon their faces" before the throne.¹³

Under the names of the second category ("life"), "our life" ¹⁴ is in accord with Scripture, for, as synonymous with "Eve," it is applicable to Mary, the counterpart of Eve, and indeed in the particular meaning of secondary principle of the supernatural, glorious life of grace.

But Mary is not simply such a principle in the sense that she effects the application of the grace of redemption through her prayer. This title means rather that Mary, by virtue of the divine motherhood through which she brought forth Christ, in Him gives the principle of grace to the world. Hence in the Litany of Loreto, *Mater divinae gratiae* is strikingly connected with *Mater Christi*. For the same reason no one but she is called mother of grace, although other saints may obtain grace for us through their prayers.

On the other hand, Mary is distinguished from Christ and God through the fact that she is called the mother

¹³ Ps. 109:1, *Dixit Dominus Domino meo: Sede a dextris meis* (cf. Heb. 1:3, 13); Ps. 44:10, *Astitit regina a dextris tuis*; Phil. 2:10, *ut in nomine Jesu omne genu flectatur*, Apoc. 7:11, *Et omnes angeli . . . ceciderunt in conspectu throni in facies suas*.

¹⁴ Cf. the patristic texts in Passaglia, *op. cit.*, sec. 6, c.4, art. 5, 6. In the *Salve Regina* the Jansenists wished to make the title *vita* disappear by changing the text to *vitae dulcedo*.

of grace or the maternal principle of grace. The eternal Wisdom is also represented in the books of Wisdom next to God the Father as maternal (i.e., mediating through love, principle of grace), and in His action on earth is described as the source and channel of living waters.¹⁵ So Mary also remains under this more particular name the image of a divine person. From this point of view she is more definitely the image of the Holy Ghost. With Him she has in common the symbol of the "dove" which, particularly in this sense, is full of meaning, and also the name and the quality of *paracletus*. Corresponding to the Hebrew *Menachem* (*consolator*), this latter name has not with the Holy Ghost the specific meaning of *advocatus* and *intercessor* but of *consolator*. Here it means a *consolator* not only through words, but as *causa laetitiae*, i.e., informant of the good, which forms the contents of joy. This likewise is the case with Mary.¹⁶

THE IMMINENT POSITION OF MARY

In her imminent position as a member of the universe and in particular of mankind, Mary appears next to Christ, as the noblest and most important member, or rather as a member of mankind raised to a higher order through whom and in whom mankind stands in mystical communication with Christ.

Considered as an offspring of mankind, she is its highest flower as Christ is its most excellent fruit. For that very reason she is the highest and likewise the heavenly spiritual and mystical flower, the "mystical rose," the

¹⁵ Ecclus. 24:40; cf. the patristic material in Passaglia, *op. cit.*, III, nos. 1369 ff.

¹⁶ Passaglia, *op. cit.*, no. 1393.

“spiritual lily”; for Christ is brought forth in her and from her as fruit of the earth and of heaven at the same time.

Mary, as the flower of mankind turned toward heaven, further receives in the conception of the Logos the dew and light of heaven for all mankind; she forms the throne of Emmanuel, who descends as the principle of grace. Thus she is also for all mankind the head member, the instrument in the contracting of the mystical marriage with the Logos, which was made in her and through her. In this respect she may even be called, in a relative sense, the mystical head of mankind, so far as this latter is thought of, not as one body with Christ, but in contradistinction with Him, as His bride.

Still it is not Mary, but Christ Himself who is the real mystical Head of mankind. As mother of this Head she obtains toward the rest of men such a position by virtue of which she is the mother also of the mystical body of Christ; or as mother of Christ, mother of Christians also; and as bodily mother of the Son of God, spiritual mother of men with regard to their state as children of God.

This universal motherhood of Mary, which is usually called the mystical motherhood, may not at all be considered a purely moral or so-called motherhood. In its nature it is as equally real, organic, living, and substantial a relation as that of the bodily motherhood. It rests on the maternal relation of Mary to Christ and the organic relation in which Christians stand to Christ as their Head. Ultimately this mystical motherhood is derived from the fact that Mary, as real bride of God, is seat and instrument of the divine light of grace.

The cohesion of this secondary with the primary motherhood is so close that we may say: Mary receives in the

conception of Christ the real, divine Word as *semen divinum*, in such a way that in Christ and with Christ men also must be born from it as children, and that consequently all men are virtually brought forth in her bosom through the conception of Christ.

In Christ Mary also receives and brings forth her own spiritual Head. As His bodily mother she is subject to Him as to her spiritual Bridegroom and is given to Him as His partner because as man He is in His mother's womb "man," not "child," according to the spirit.¹⁷ Likewise, in view of spiritual motherhood, she is also with regard to men subordinate and coordinate to her Son as to their spiritual Father. Therefore, as spiritual mother of men, she takes a position between these latter and Christ, in a way analogous to that which other mothers have between the father and the children.

By her position as mother of Christ and of Christians, Mary shares the quality of spiritual vine of that portion of mankind which is endowed with grace. We may also regard her in Christ and with Christ as the cornerstone on which the latter rests; more closely, as that cornerstone through which the whole structure is connected with the primary cornerstone.

However, so far as mankind, built up on Christ as an organic body, is connected with Him as with its Head, Mary's position in this body may be considered that of the heart. This is true of the mother in the natural community of the family. In the mystical body of Christ the analogy of the physical organism generally holds true in

¹⁷ Jer. 31:22. The word "man" characterizes the being, enclosed in the mother's womb, as a person who, according to the spirit, is not subjected to development, but who already possesses the full maturity of a man.

a higher manner and in a fuller measure than in any human grouping. Christ is, therefore, in an exceptionally deep and emphatic sense, the "Head" of His mystical body. Mary also, in a sense no less deep and emphatic, is the heart of this body.

As there exists between Mary and Christ the same organically mutual relation as there is between heart and head, there also takes place in Mary an organic mediation between the Head and the other members, as the heart does in physical bodies. In particular, Mary, as the heart of the mystical body, appears as the privileged seal of the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from the Head to animate the entire body; as the member in whom the entire life of the Head is reflected in the most perfect manner and whose functions condition and support in many ways the influence of the Head on the other members.

Moreover, in Mary this representation strikingly characterizes her personal position, full of life, in the internal organism of the body of Christ, as contrasted with that place which belongs to the official representatives of Christ in the external organism of the Church.

Under the symbols mentioned, we often find with the Fathers particularly those of "flower" and "root"; still oftener, that of the "vine."¹⁸ That of the heart is somewhat rarely used, although it is present if we carry through the thought of the mystical body.¹⁹ In any case it is richer, deeper, and more characteristic than the name sometimes used, *collum corporis mystici*.²⁰ This title can

¹⁸ Cf. Passaglia, *op. cit.*, nos. 1365 f.

¹⁹ A more detailed but also moralizing discussion is found in Ernest of Prague, *Mariale*, chap. 83.

²⁰ The expression is originated by St. Bernardine of Siena, *Sermo 5 de nativitate B.M.V.*, chap. 8 (ed. Venice, 1745, IV, 92).

indeed be justified and is even obvious to a superficial view; but it sounds rather crude, in some languages more so than in others.

The universal, mystical motherhood of Mary is often explained too flatly and one-sidedly and is connected too loosely with the bodily motherhood toward Christ. We easily picture it to ourselves in such a way that it stands in relation to the bodily motherhood like that of the adoptive motherhood, foster motherhood, in the case of a human mother, which a person could obtain apart from the physical motherhood. The origin of the universal motherhood is traced to the commission of Christ which Mary received at the foot of the Cross. We see its functions preferably in the intercession through which Mary distributes the grace of redemption, which Christ gained. Thus the divine motherhood stands forth partly as the reason of her power of intercession and partly as the motive of her loving care for the redeemed. As we shall see later, the moral motherhood is not adequately expressed in this way. Mary's participation in the actual deed of redemption is not thereby taken into consideration.

We approach the essence of Mary's universal motherhood more closely when we take as an analogy the extension of the human motherhood of a human mother to the bride of her son, or to their children. Here the second motherhood is achieved through the first. Hence it shares the nature of the first one so much that it rises above the idea of a merely adoptive motherhood or foster motherhood. It contains a real relationship (*cognatio*) between mother and child and an organic communication of life. This point of view is present, therefore, to the mind of the Fathers and theologians when they base Mary's uni-

versal motherhood on the fact that she brought forth in Christ the Head of all mankind.

Yet this point of view is not sufficient. With regard to the extension and broadening of the motherhood, there exists with Mary an essential difference from other mothers. In the case of the latter, the motherhood is extended as a bodily one; in Mary's case her bodily motherhood establishes, opposite Christ, in relation to men not a bodily, but a spiritual motherhood. St. Augustine says: "Physically, Mary is of Christ only His mother; spiritually, she is His sister and mother. Spiritually, she is not the mother of our head, the very Savior, but the mother of us, His members. But physically she is indeed the mother of that head."²¹ This special relation is conditioned through the higher, supernatural character of the primary and secondary motherhood of Mary. Yet it disturbs their organic and mutual relation so little that it forms rather the basis of a much closer and more vivid connection between both than can be found with ordinary mothers.

The most graphic picture of this connection is seen in the physical organism: the heart in its double relation to the head and members.

THE CENTRAL POSITION OF MARY

From the fact that the Mother of God shares Christ's own transcendental and immanent position, she participates also in Christ's own central position between creatures and God. She must, therefore, be considered the mediatrix in a sense analogous to that in which Christ is

²¹ St. Augustine, *De s. virginitate*, chaps. 5 f.; *PL*, XL, 399.

the mediator. Between the other creatures and God, Mary generally stands not merely close to God. As she is connected through her being and origin with nature, she is also, by her divine motherhood, so connected with God through an organic tie that she is herself a substantial link, which puts creation in relation with God. Her entire maternal activity takes root in this quality of her person or is most closely allied to it.

In contrast to all other merely created mediators, she is further mediatrix in so unique a manner that Christ's being as mediator is simply attached to her motherhood. For Christ was not given to the world without her co-operation. Furthermore, He receives from her the flesh in which and through which He exercises His office of mediator. Lastly, He is, through her mediation alone, connected with men as their Head.

Hence her office of mediatrix has this in common with that of Christ, that it is in its kind both essential and universal; for in one way or another it comprises all persons as well as all goods and all association with God to which the mediatorship of Christ is extended.

In this sense Mary is called, in the language of the Fathers, "the ring" or "the ladder," connecting the earth with heaven, the world with God; also "the ark of the covenant," or "the throne of atonement," on which God meets His creatures.²²

Evidently through the mediatorship of Mary that of Christ is not lessened, but is supposed and elucidated. For Mary's whole position as mediatrix and all her functions of mediation point to Christ as to the mediator. They are

²² For numerous texts from the Fathers about the mediatrix, see Passaglia, *op. cit.*, nos. 1399 f., and Marracci, *Polyanthea Mar.*, s.v. *mediatrix*, etc.

conditioned through the mediatorship of Christ as the most fundamental and the highest one.

Mary is particularly distinguished from Christ through the fact that she is directly only mediatrix with Christ, and only by Christ with God. She is in general only mediatrix, or the way, whereas Christ is mediatrix as well as the first principle and last end of men's union with God. This distinction comes out most clearly through what follows. As the incarnate God, Christ in His person brings God closer to men. Therefore He is first the bearer and representative of the influence of God on creatures; only in the second place is He the representative also of creation in the association with God. Mary, on the contrary, is only the first among men to whom God approaches and whom He unites with Himself, because she receives the communication of God first and most directly.

Accordingly the activity of Mary's mediation has this specific meaning, that it represents the cooperation which becomes those who receive the grace to obtain this one. But in this respect it is also so perfect and universal that Mary exercises her influence in the distribution of grace both through her intercession and through preparing the way, namely, with the acceptance of the principle of grace in the Incarnation, and through her part in Christ's sacrifice, which gained the grace.

THE RIGHT OF MARY TO VENERATION

We have explained Mary's unique excellence, through which by the grace of her motherhood she rises above all other creatures, however greatly they may be endowed with grace. To this excellence there evidently corresponds

a worthiness of veneration all its own, or a right to veneration. The latter is incomparably higher than that belonging to other saints. In comparison with the latter honor, which we call simply *dulia*, it is usually called *hyperdulia*.

The *hyperdulia* differs from the simple *dulia* in degree and in essence, as also the privileges of Mary upon which it rests, are of a different and higher nature than those of the other saints.

In contrast with the personal holiness of the saints, the dignity of the divine motherhood contains in particular for all creatures a relation of dependence on Mary and subordination to her as to the mistress of creation, the queen and mother of grace: in other words, a relation of subjects. On the part of men there exists also a particular duty of gratitude toward her and a need of her mediation. Consequently the worship of Mary is a stricter duty and also possesses a special form.

Evidently Mary's eminent worthiness of veneration does not harm the honor of God and of Christ. Mary is only a reflection of the divine magnificence of Christ; and her recognition is only a result of the honor paid to God and Christ. Moreover, the worship of the Mother of God is exercised in the Church precisely with the purpose of honoring Christ and God more perfectly in her and by her, quite as *latria* paid to the humanity of Christ, or of Christ as man, serves to a more perfect adoration of His divinity.

About the idea of *hyperdulia*, see particularly St. Peter Canisius,²³ and Suarez,²⁴ who is much more fortunate

²³ St. Peter Canisius, *De Maria Deip. Virg.*, Bk. V, chap. 13.

²⁴ Suarez, *De incarn.*, disp. 22, sec. 3.

here than where he applies this idea to the humanity of Christ.

In view of the relation of the veneration of Mary to that of Christ, we note here a fact which at first glance seems strange to Protestants and also to many Catholics. According to Catholic custom, the Litany of Loreto is said during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Considering the strictness with which Rome sees to it that during this exposition the entire attention is centered on the Eucharist, we not only see in the recitation of the Litany of Loreto no diminution of the veneration of Christ, but we must rather recognize that the Litany here bears even the character of a sacramental devotion, with direct relation to the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

We see that this litany is well suited to that purpose, if we understand it in the spirit of the Church. We honor God most perfectly if, during Mass, we make Christ in His humanity the immediate object and example, the means and bearer of our adoration. Likewise we honor Christ here in His humanity most perfectly by giving the person who stands closest to His humanity and who is His throne, a place in our veneration to make her the example, means, and bearer of our adoration. On both counts the pious disposition is, therefore, subjectively more strongly stimulated and elevated, and also objectively a more worthy homage is thereby paid to God.

APPENDIX I

The Protevangelium

THE first and fundamental promise of the Redeemer, correctly called the protevangelium, was made in Paradise to our first parents after their fall. The redemption is the deliverance of mankind from the dominion which the devil obtained through his victory over Adam by means of the temptation of the woman. Therefore it is here announced through the promise about "the seed of the woman." This means a future Son of the ancestress, and at the same time and in the first place a mother, who is prefigured by Eve and who produces the Son without the seed of a man. Together with His mother this Son must stand in perpetual and invincible enmity to the devil and crush his head, i.e., overthrow his rule, while the devil can only lie in wait for His heel, that is, attack Him in the lower part of His being. Face to face with the first couple, in whom mankind has fallen under the dominion of the devil, there is thus placed one of their descendants, or rather, a new couple, proceeding from them, in whom and by whom this dominion will be broken. It is also indicated that the head of the serpent will be crushed at the very moment when the heel of the woman is wounded, and precisely on that account.

The following is the text of the Vulgate: *Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius; ipsa conteret caput tuum et tu insidiaberis calcaneo ejus*

(Gen. 3:15). In the Hebrew text the same verb *suf* (= *inhiare, infestare*) is used where the Vulgate uses *conterere* and *insidiare* in this passage. In the first instance, the word must mean, in the context, "a victorious pursuit," just as the "enmity" is an invincible enmity on the part of the woman and the "seed of the woman." Otherwise no effective punishment would be inflicted on the serpent.

The Latin text uses the feminine form *ipsa*. The Hebrew text, at least the present-day one, gives the masculine form for *ipse*, and the corresponding masculine form for *ejus*. Thus it indicates, not the woman, but the seed of the woman as the conqueror of the serpent. Since the invincible enmity against the serpent is represented as common to both, the victory must also be common to both in one way or another; and this is shown by the text which has the obvious purpose of making the punishment of the serpent complete, since a woman is the instrument of his defeat, as the first woman is the instrument of his victory.

Considering the later similar promises about the seed of Abraham and the explanation of the Apostle: *Non dicit et seminibus quasi in multis* (i.e., *posteris*) *sed quasi in uno "et semini tuo," qui est Christus* (Gal. 3:16), we must understand by "the seed of the woman" a single and certain son only. In contrast with other sons, who according to the order of nature proceed from the seed of the man and are called after it, the expression "seed of the woman" indicates him as a son who proceeds exclusively, hence in a supernatural way, from the woman, i.e., is born of a virgin. Interpreted thus, the expression is the more suitable because the "seed of the man," that is, the entire offspring of the ancestors, was already conquered in them by

the devil, and subjected to his dominion. Accordingly we must understand by "the woman," who is referred to here, that woman from whom this son proceeds immediately. For He proceeds anew from the remote ancestresses through the seed of the man. All the more as this woman, with regard to the enmity against the serpent, appears prominently in such close community with her seed.

Moreover, the expression "the woman" indicates this woman as the ideal of womanliness and as representative of all womankind, which would conquer the devil in a later representative, even as it was conquered by him in the first woman. Therefore, if the expression indicates Eve also, it must refer to her as the prototype of the later woman. Similarly, according to the explanation of the Apostle (Heb. 1:5), the words in the prophecy of Nathan about the Son of David, "I will be to him a father" (II Kings 7:14), refer beyond Solomon directly to Christ. In any event Eve by herself, in her circumstances, was altogether incapable of being placed opposite the devil as his conqueror. This is also the traditional explanation of the Church, about which Pius IX expresses himself in the bull *Ineffabilis*.¹

¹ Pope Pius IX, Bull *Ineffabilis*: "With the words, 'I shall put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed,' God in His very first announcement to the world gave the sovereign remedy His divine mercy had prepared for the renewal of our human race. He thereby repressed the audacity of the deceiver, the devil, and wonderfully lifted up the hope of mankind. Interpreting these words, the Fathers teach us that this divine announcement clearly and distinctly points to the merciful Redeemer of the human race in the person of the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, and designates the most blessed Virgin Mary as His mother. It expresses notably the very enmities of both against the devil. Wherefore Christ, the mediator between God and man, upon assuming our human nature, erases the handwriting of the decree which was against us, and fastens it as conqueror to the cross. Likewise, bound to Him by the closest and most indissoluble bond,

The fact that the crushing of the serpent's head is placed against his bite, expresses in a clear and magnificent way the inequality of power between the woman and the serpent, the excellence of the seed of the woman, and the humiliating impotence of the devil. The figure is still more striking if we understand it as meaning that the head of the serpent is crushed at the very moment when he attacks the heel. Therefore it is pointed out that the devil is conquered precisely where he wounded the Savior, according to His earthly side, i.e., through the bodily death of the Savior, caused by him.

As with all other prophecies, this prophecy is elucidated fully only by its realization. However, the elements quoted seem to follow from a sharper consideration of the text itself.

the most holy Virgin carries into effect, together with Him and by Him, the perpetual enmities against the poisonous serpent, is completely victorious over it, and crushes it by her immaculate foot."

APPENDIX II

The Human Procreation

IT IS useful to observe here that modern physiologists hold a doctrine, ascertained from experiments, which can be of great theological benefit. Formerly it was held that human generation is thus accomplished: the male sex alone has of itself the germ and germinating power, and the female sex supplies merely the matter and the application of germination, and hence the female sex is like the earth receiving the seed of a plant. Modern physiologists hold that human generation takes place as it happens in the plant itself, by the insertion of pollen into the germ-cell, while in the case of human generation atoms take the place of pollen and are called spermatozoids. Thus by union with that germ with which it must grow together into one, the male seed determines the germ (that is, the egg formed by the female, but not yet complete) to unfold and bring forth the fruit, the fetus; hence the male seed perfects and completes the germ which is not yet complete to form a fruit-bearing germ. Consequently we understand more fully and profoundly (1) the perfect unity of nature between both sexes, so far as for the very first formation of the fetus the woman meets the man not in a mere passive but in an active way, by truly generating; (2) the unity of flesh between the couple as a substantial unity of the same flesh in the fetus as if from each side the fruit is produced by both, that

is, obtained materially and produced formally by both. And while the flesh of the generating parties grows together into one fetus as into a common fruit, that same flesh must be more regarded as one flesh, so far as they are one by the act of carnal connection, the one using the flesh of the other as his own, or as a mere mingling of flesh; (3) the possibility of a virginal generation maintained in the virtue and manner of a real generation, so far as by its very nature the maternal germ is prepared either so that it does not need a determination and complement from without (as is the case with the queen bee in the generation of milliferous bees, which therefore is always held as the symbol of the virgin mother of God), or, although it needs a determinating and complementing power from without, this power from without is employed not in a natural way by means of a material seed, but in a supernatural way by applying the divine power of the Holy Ghost. According to the first opinion, as the Fathers have it in their dissertations, it is not shown, unless with difficulty, how the Blessed Virgin is not somehow a mother, but a real producing mother, and especially, how the protevangelium speaks of Christ as the seed of the woman; for he is called the seed not simply of anyone, as if he is in and from anyone who furnished the matter, but as the seed formed by and from that same person.

APPENDIX III

The *Actio Unitiva* Ascribed to the Holy Ghost

IT IS evident that there are important reasons for ascribing the *actio unitiva* to the Holy Ghost, and that is why this ascribing has a rich and deep meaning. We shall here summarize the most important reasons.

The fact that the *actio unitiva* is ascribed to the Holy Ghost as its principle characterizes it as an action differing from that of creatures and from that of God Himself in the natural order as much as from the intrinsic action of God proper to His nature. Thus the *actio unitiva* appears in the first instance as an action of God, and indeed of a supernatural character, the aim of which rises above the natural order; in the second instance, as an *actio* which proceeds from God as an influence exerted because of a free and infinite love.

The accomplishment of the union by the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from the very person who assumes humanity, shows that this person is absolutely complete in Himself and assumes the flesh, not because anything is lacking to Him, but by virtue of the fullness of life and power, which reveals itself in the Holy Ghost.

As the Holy Ghost is produced last of the persons in the Blessed Trinity, it is likewise He who appears as the natural author of the relations of God *ad extra*. And as He forms the crowning tie between the Father and the Son,

so He effects the tie between the Son and His created nature.

The incarnation of the eternal Word considered as the actual "becoming flesh" presents a further analogy with the embodiment of the interior word from the spirit of man into the spoken word of the mouth. As the spoken word becomes related to the interior word through the breath, which brings forth, so the flesh of the eternal Word is formed by this Word and is united with it through the breath of God.

In its full essence the achieving of the union is an infusion and inbreathing of a principle of life by God, analogous to the natural and supernatural completion of the first man: an infusion and inbreathing into human nature, of the eternal Word according to His own subsistence. As such it appears most distinctly when represented as being effected through the effusion of God's eternal breath of life, and this in a much deeper sense than the completion of the first man.

Lastly, we must understand the Incarnation as the highest form of God's communication of Himself to the creature, and therefore of the deification, of the endowment with grace, and of the sanctification of the creature. All these effects now are such that they are naturally ascribed to the Holy Ghost and through that fact are strikingly elucidated in their essence.

APPENDIX IV

The Annunciation by the Angel

BEHOLD thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High (He shall be acknowledged and honored as the Son of the Most High); and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His father (the kingdom promised to David); and He shall reign in the house of Jacob (to whom He was promised) forever. And of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31 ff.).

At the question of the Blessed Virgin, how this will happen without violation of her virginity, the angel continues and explains the way the conception would take place and brings out also the excellence of the promised Son: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

The first message is undoubtedly less definite and excellent in all its parts than the second. In particular it does not yet fully explain the divine nature of the promised child, so that the Virgin might still think of an eminent earthly king. Or more correctly: all circumstances taken well into consideration, the words could apply only to the promised Messiah, who must be Emmanuel at the

same time. But still they were not yet so modified that Mary, who in her humility considered it impossible for her to be called to be the mother of the Emmanuel, could not have thought that perhaps the words referred to someone other than the Emmanuel. From this we may quite simply explain Mary's question about the keeping of her virginity.

The common view on the contrary, namely, that the Virgin applied the words of the angel to the Emmanuel, but was yet uneasy about her virginity, seems to us quite inadequate. If anyone knew, then certainly Mary knew, that the Emmanuel would be born of a virgin. Therefore the answer of the angel appears to be a complete solution to the question about her virginity. For the fact that the child is a supernatural being is included in the explanation of the way the production is to take place. The two parts of the answer can be understood correctly only through their mutual relation to each other. Hence the influence of the Holy Ghost and the "power of the Most High" must be applied, not only to the replacing of the male influence in the production of the human nature of the Child, but also to the higher being of the Child. So the Child will be, by virtue of the influence of the Holy Ghost, "great" and "holy" or "the holy one"; and in virtue of the influence of the Most High's own power with His production, not simply "Son of the Most High," i.e., a representative of the power and dominion of the Most High, but truly "Son of God." This last element lies in the expression which is often incorrectly explained, "shall overshadow thee."

The real meaning of the expression seems to follow from the allusion to Isa. 45:8: "Drop down dew, ye

heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just (Hebrew *sedeg* = *justice*, in the abstract instead of the concrete); let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Savior" (Hebrew *jesha* = *bring forth deliverance, help*). As the words "bud forth a Savior" (*Jesus*) here hold good, likewise the production of Jesus as the Holy One holds also in "dropping down dew," that is, raining from the heavens or the clouds; and by it the effusion of the Son of God from the bosom of the Most High, enthroned in heaven, into the earthly bosom of the Virgin, is strikingly expressed. Next to it both "the holy one" and "the overshadowing" contain an allusion to the descent of the Holy Ghost in the cloud over the tabernacle, to rest in it on the ark of the covenant and to make this one therefore pre-eminently "the holy one."

The term "the holy one" in the neuter gender expresses emphatically the essential holiness of the fruit of Mary and defines also the deep and real meaning of the biblical name of Christ (Anointed), which answers to it; more especially, as the descent of the power of the Most High into the bosom of the Virgin represents most significantly likewise the original and essential anointing of her fruit through the blending of a heavenly element, which of itself is holy. Through the hidden allusion to Isa. 7:14 in the words of the angel, the meaning of "Emmanuel" (God with us) is also incorporated into the words "the Holy One" and "Son of God," as expressively elucidated in Matt. 1:23.

However, the attribute of true "Son of God" and Emmanuel also implies that the royal dignity of the Child, indicated in the angel's first words, is not one that can belong to Him as son and heir of David over the house of

Jacob. It is a kingship like that which is due to Him as Son and heir of God, namely, the community of dominion over all things. In this sense the royal dignity of the Child was accordingly proclaimed, not by Gabriel but by Elizabeth in her salutation of "Mother of my Lord" (Luke 1:43), by Zachary in his song of praise: "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord" (Luke 1:76), and also by the multitude of angels at the announcement of the birth to the shepherds: "This day is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11); probably also by Mary herself with the words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord" (Luke 1:38).

We further remark that this is one of those texts of Sacred Scripture which, because the expression is formed by God Himself, have an exceptionally rich meaning, whose fullness according to the mind of God permits and can form the foundation of a great abundance of explanations.